

CHRISTIAN COURIER

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Court case pits child against mother

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — A Supreme Court of Canada case in which a five-year-old boy is suing his mother for injuries he received before birth has drawn the keen attention of pro-life and pro-choice groups. The case raises questions such as: should a child be allowed to sue his or her parents?; and should an unborn child be considered a person or simply part of the mother?

The case involves five-year-old Ryan Leigh Dobson, who is suing his mother, Cynthia Dobson, for injuries he received in a car accident near Moncton, N.B., on March 14, 1993. Dobson's car skidded into a truck and Ryan was born hours later by caesarian section. His mother was in her 27th week of pregnancy. As a result of the accident, Ryan suffers from cerebral palsy.

Ryan's grandfather, Gerald Price, is acting as his litigation guardian and launched the lawsuit in 1995 in the New Brunswick provincial court.



Will the Dobson court case result in the recognition of a fetus as a person under Canadian law?

Mrs. Dobson's insurance company is fighting the case in her name.

The worth of a fetus

Several pro-life and pro-choice organizations have acted

as interveners in the Supreme Court case, which wrapped up Dec. 8. One of those pro-life groups is the Catholic Group for Health, Justice and Life, an umbrella group representing several Catholic agencies.

William Sammon, a lawyer who represented the umbrella group in the case, said they were "attempting to have the court address the worth of an unborn child."

The Catholic group inter-

vened in the case "because of its ethical and philosophical position that human life, at every stage of development, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and is worthy of protection especially when most vulnerable, such as the child in this case," says the group in a press release.

The group is arguing that the premise the mother and unborn child are one is illogical because the born child already has the established right in law to sue a third party for injuries incurred in the womb as a result of negligence by the third party.

Although pro-choice groups argue that the fetus has no rights as a person in Canada, Sammon says, "there are already principles in the law that treat the unborn [child] as an individual."

He points out that a 1933 Supreme Court case known as *Montreal Tramways* set a precedent that allows a child to sue a third party for prenatal injuries. He adds, "In Ontario, we've had

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Husband and wife agree to disagree on homosexuality

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — His evangelical peers complain that he's always bringing up the subject of homosexuality. Tony Campolo himself explains that he may be working out his guilt.

Dr. Campolo and Peggy Campolo were in town in early December, guests of a coalition of Christian groups, including the Christian Reformed Chaplaincy at the University of Toronto, to take part in a panel discussion on homosexuality. Tony Campolo is a professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. Peggy is a pro-gay activist.

Tony and Peggy are happily married, agree on many things, but disagree on what the Bible says about homosexuality. Tony believes on the basis of Romans 1 and 2,000 years of tradition that God does not allow same-sex marriages. Peggy believes that tradition has been wrong before and that Romans 1 speaks against pagan religious practices, which include pederasty. She does not think that God forbids monogamous commitment between same-sex partners.

The Campolos see their loving and respectful disagreement as a model for the church. If they can stay married holding

different views on homosexuality, the church should too, says Tony Campolo.

Albatross of guilt

Tony began by telling the story of Roger, a gay high school classmate who had to endure many cruel pranks and cutting remarks from his peers. Tony did not exempt himself from having taken part in such practices as snapping wet towels at Roger after gym class.

But he wasn't there when five boys took Roger into a shower and urinated on him. A few days later, Roger went into his

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COURTESY THE CAMPOLOS

Tony and Peggy Campolo



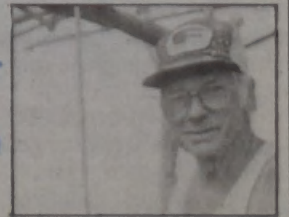
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News

Case deals with rights of women, status of fetuses

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regulations in place for 23 years [in which] a child can sue anyone for prenatal injury." But Sammon says it is very unusual for a child to sue his or her parents. "In Ontario, there has not been a single case of this for 25 years," he asserts.

How far will the Court go?

Although the court case has finished, the Supreme Court is not expected to hand down a decision for at least three months. If the court decides in Ryan Dobson's favor, Sammon says, "it would be tacit acknowledgement that an unborn fetus can suffer injuries.... It would be helpful as far as recognizing the value of [a fetus.]"

But past decisions of the Supreme Court indicate that the court prefers that decisions on the rights of a fetus be made by Canada's Parliament and legislatures.

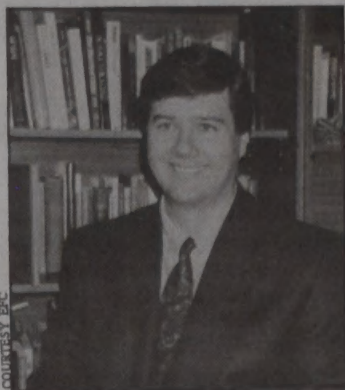
Bruce Clemenger, director of national affairs for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC),

spoke on behalf of EFC at the court case. One of EFC's concerns was that "we didn't want the court to adopt the fiction that a mother and an unborn child are one," says Clemenger. EFC's position is that the two are distinct and that "in medicine, the [unborn] child is often treated as a separate entity."

A second concern of EFC's is that the mother to the child owes a duty of care. The case involves the responsibilities of a pregnant woman as a driver and the duty of care she owes to anyone who might suffer an injury as a result of her negligent driving.

EFC's position is that Ryan should have a right to sue his mother. In Ontario, a child has the right to sue a parent for negligence, but this is not the case in New Brunswick, says Clemenger.

A year ago, both EFC and the Catholic umbrella group were involved as interveners in a Supreme Court case involving a glue-sniffing pregnant mother in Winnipeg. In that case, says EFC in a press release, "the



Bruce Clemenger, director of national affairs for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

majority of the Supreme Court assumed that a woman and her unborn child can be treated as separate legal entities." Comparing the two cases, Clemenger notes that "the Winnipeg case dealt with fetal rights while in the womb. The Dobson case deals with the right of a child once born to hold someone accountable" for injuries received while in the womb.

David Thwaites, a Christian

lawyer based in Orangeville, Ont., suggests the Dobsons have gone to court mainly because "the severity of the disability suffered by Ryan is creating cost consequences for the family." The family is hoping for compensation from the mother's insurance company, to help pay medical expenses. Thwaites explains that Ryan Dobson's grandfather is involved because minors can't sue anyone by themselves, but need to have a litigation guardian.

Thwaites expects the Supreme Court to throw out the case, because favoring Ryan Dobson's claim would go against what the court has done before. But he notes that some judges on the Supreme Court have a dissenting point of view. "I hope it goes the other way," he says.

Pro-choice against the woman

In the Dobson case, the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) took a stand on the pro-choice side of the fence. Marilyn Wilson, CARAL's executive director, says, "CARAL is completely sympathetic with the family....

But we feel this is not the way to deal with [this situation]." The outcome of this case will affect only one child, says Wilson, and a win by Ryan Dobson "certainly would not help out pregnant women at all."

CARAL sees a fetus as being part of its mother, not as being a person, says Wilson. It does not become a person until birth, she believes. Therefore, she sees the Dobson case as being like a pregnant woman suing herself.

"A finding that a child can sue its mother for damages caused while a fetus may have a profound negative impact on a pregnant woman's ability to make choices about her body during pregnancy," states CARAL in a press release. "Every aspect of her life could become the subject of scrutiny by the courts." This could create two classes of women — pregnant and not pregnant — who would not be treated equally, asserts Wilson.

Instead of using a court case to resolve such issues, Wilson says Canadian society should provide more adequate care for disabled children.

Farmers oppose seeds with altered genes

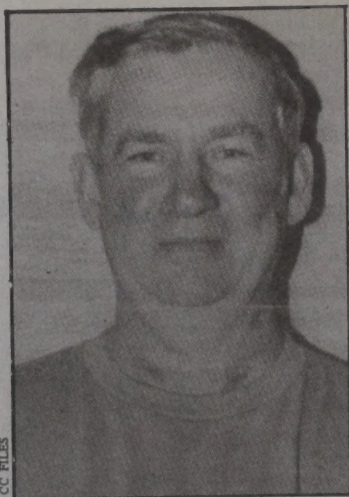
GUELPH, Ont. (CFFO) — The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) has spoken up against genetically altered seeds, and called for government help for pork producers.

CFFO is officially opposed to the commercial introduction of a gene that keeps harvested seeds from germinating. This gene would "benefit the seed companies, not the public at large," says Bob Bedggood, CFFO's president. "Our members are not in favour of anyone having that kind of control over the crops we grow for society."

CFFO members from 22 district associations across Ontario adopted the policy opposing the introduction of the genes at a recent provincial board meeting.

The genes have been a topic of much discussion throughout the farm community over the past year. Farmers buying the genetically altered seeds get one crop but cannot keep the harvested seeds for replanting the following year because they will not germinate.

A few months ago, CFFO surveyed farmers about the genes at Canada's Outdoor Farm show. Of 286 surveys completed by farmers, 169 indicated that farm



Bob Bedggood, CFFO's president

organizations should actively oppose the introduction of the new genes.

Hard times for pork farmers

Because Canada's pork farmers are facing financial hardship, CFFO has called on the government to create a short-term financial support program for pork producers.

"Pork producers are going through a prolonged period of below-cost production pricing,"

says Bedggood, who is himself a pork producer. "We need government to help out in the short-term and to work with us to provide stability for the long-term."

Bedggood and other farm leaders have been actively working with federal and provincial politicians to address the issue of declines in farm income.

Bedggood's request for short-term assistance stressed the historic CFFO policies of targeting programs to family farmers and asking for a set maximum on the number of dollars a farmer can obtain from a payout.

Elbert van Donkersgoed, executive director of CFFO, predicts that hog farmers will likely face price deflation for several years. He says the increased productivity of newer technology, combined with fewer trade barriers, and changes in Asia's financial markets will create a price spiral downward for many agricultural products.

"Deflation will be with us for a long time," says van Donkersgoed. "Agriculture has to be ready to address the challenges that declining prices will bring."

Dobson case marks shift in Canadian society, says sociologist

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — The Dobson Supreme Court Case demonstrates how Canadians are turning to courts rather than to the church for answers to moral and political dilemmas, according to a feminist sociologist.

Denyse Cote, a feminist professor of sociology at the University of Quebec in Hull, says the Dobson case shows us "where we're at as a society.... It's a question of how the judicial system is used not only to regulate society but to be part and parcel of social engineering practices." Since the 1980s, the courts have developed a stronger authoritative role in Canada, she says. "We don't have churches as an authority to decide how society should be."

Examining this trend, Cote thinks it's very human to look for guidance. More and more, we look to the court system for a way to go.

What's in the background of the Dobson case is that healthcare costs are going up for families, as a result of the federal government's low transfer payments to provinces, says Cote.

Cote, who is a member of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, believes that a fetus should not be regarded as a person, although she acknowledges that fetuses can often survive a premature birth.

One key aspect of the Dobson case is "the legal right of a woman to control her body during a pregnancy," she says. "Twenty-five years ago, this would be unthinkable because of respect for the mother. Now respect for the child is more important."

News

Campolo: 'Every movement needs a devil'

... continued from page 1

parents' garage and hanged himself. Tony can't forget about Roger. And that's why he constantly berates the evangelical community for its homophobia.

"Not every movement needs a god," he said, "but every movement needs a devil," especially if they want to raise funds. He explained that the evangelical community used to regard communism as the devil. But since the decline of communism, the gay community has been scape-goated as the cause for family breakdown, Campolo asserted.

Ironically, "it's the heterosexuals who are getting divorced and the gays who want to get married," says Campolo. He learned from the Hebrew prophets that they never painted the Assyrians as the devil but they took the situation of exile to a higher level by saying that the devil is within us.

Much agreement

Peggy and Tony agree on many things when it comes to

the homosexual issue. Both agree that gays do not choose their orientation. Both agree that most are not able to change their orientation through a charismatic experience (Tony interviewed 300 gay men and not one of them was able to change, though he does not rule out the possibility).

Biblical commands questioned

Both agree that the Old Testament references to homosexuality belong to the purity codes, which, they say, were done away with by Jesus. Both say that the reference in Timothy is about castrating boys not about a loving relationship. Both believe that homosexuals should not stay in the closet and that one should never talk about homosexual lifestyle(s) without the "s." Both are against promiscuous sex and both are angry about the lies spread about homosexuals.

Where they differ is on how to interpret Romans 1 and on what weight to give to tradition.

There were three respondents on the panel. One of them, the Rev. Dr. Patrick Hyu, who represented "Fidelity" (an Anglican group that considers same-sex relations to be unbiblical), does not think that Romans 1 is the only passage that speaks of homosexual relations as falling short of the glory of God. The Old Testament passages against homosexuality fall within the holiness code, some of which still apply today, he said. He finds the weight of his argument in Genesis 1 and 2 where God tells us what marriage is about.

Hyu warned against the misreading of the biblical stories about Naomi and Ruth, and David and Jonathan, to which some give a homosexual connotation. Our culture considers intimate relationships to be sexual relationships, but we shouldn't read that back into stories from the past, said Hyu.

Panel member Susan Mabey, a lesbian pastor of Christos Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, said that she does believe that the Bible

speaks against such homosexual activities as rape and lust. But she believes that the Bible is pretty much silent on same-sex loving relationships. She quoted the passage: "Does the clay say to the Potter, why did you make me thus?"

Panel member Chris Ambidge, who represented the Anglican pro-gay group Integrity, said that instead of being harassed about his sexual orientation he would like to get on with the task of feeding the hungry. "I cannot believe that God would be so cruel as to give me needs and desires and not want me to act on them," he added. He referred to the seven passages on homosexuality as "the seven clobber texts."

One flower

One member of the audience, who declared himself a bisexual, felt that the panel had not addressed the plight of bisexuals and transsexuals. He wondered how he, being a bisexual, could be expected to practice monogamous sex. To which Peggy

Campolo replied: "You may have more gardens to pick from, but you get to pick only one flower."

Another member of the audience said that he had changed his sexual orientation from homosexuality to heterosexuality. He asked for respect for the journey he and others who changed have taken. Tony Campolo's answer to him was: "If you believe in God, you have to believe that everything is possible."

One questioner felt that the disagreement between Peggy and Tony based on Romans 1 was merely an intellectual disagreement and that they agreed on everything else. But Peggy replied that it was much more, because there are times when Tony cannot join her physically or in spirit at important occasions, and that he cannot use his considerable skills in the causes that she espouses or celebrate with her at the wedding of a homosexual friend.

Book on RCMP couldn't be more timely

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — The RCMP is much in the news these days because of the APEC hearings, which are trying to determine how the force acted against student protesters. Questioning in the House of Commons, newspaper stories and opinion pieces are wondering: What was the relation between the RCMP and the Prime Minister's office during the APEC Summit in Vancouver?

So investigative journalist Paul Palango's new book, *The Last Guardians: The Crisis In the RCMP ... And In Canada*, is timely. "The timing could not be better," says publisher McClelland & Stewart.

Just released, the book takes a close look at the role of the Mounties in Canada, the relation between the police and the government, how several decades have reduced the once proud force to its present state, and what it all means for Canadians.

Police and government too cosy

The force has been involved in a series of embarrassing debacles — from barn-burning to Airbus ... and now the

APEC scandal.

Palango's assessment is that "whatever happened in Vancouver is what a country can expect when there isn't a proper distance between government and police. The intent and integrity of the RCMP have been subverted by the political process."

To find answers to the many questions he had, Palango set out across the country and, with the co-operation of the RCMP, talked to high-ranking officers, rode on patrols, visited training facilities and spent time at RCMP headquarters. What he found was a force struggling against impossible pressures, both societal and political.

"Across Canada the RCMP seems to be in a state of total confusion, performing so many different roles and carrying out so many duties that it is sometimes impossible for individual members to know who they are and what they are supposed to be doing..." writes Palango. "They definitely want to be the best, and they are absolutely committed to serving Canada, but almost every man and woman in red serge feels that they are being blocked from being all they could be —

handcuffed as it were."

Palango concludes by recommending a full public inquiry into almost every aspect of the RCMP, and a federal review of the issues of privacy and secrecy in Canada. He wants to make information more attainable for both public and private investigators. He says the Mounties really are the last guardians for Canada.

The Last Guardians is available for \$29.99 Cdn (cloth; ISBN 0-7710-6906-5) from McClelland & Stewart Inc., 481 University Ave., Suite 900, Toronto, ON M5G 2E9; (416) 598-1114; fax: (416) 598-4002.

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Editorial

A very civil discussion on homosexuality is possible

When I heard that Tony Campolo would be at the University of Toronto taking part in a discussion on homosexuality, I decided to attend. I usually respect Campolo's views on things. He's one evangelical speaker who seems to have his feet on the ground. Maybe it's because he's a professor of sociology. I did not know about Peggy. In fact, when I met Tony in the halls of University College on the way to the lecture hall, I introduced myself to him, but failed to do so to a woman in the group who turned out to be his wife, Peggy. I remedied that situation after the discussion.

Once seated in the hall, I recognized several other Christian Reformed people, some pastors among them. One of them, John Tenyenhuis, wondered whether I was going to report on the event. I don't know, I said. I am here primarily to continue my education. "*Dat is goed*," he said in an attempt to bring me back to my Dutch roots.

The idea of continuing my education has always been with me as editor and as human being. Especially when it comes to a hotly disputed topic like homosexuality. And what better place to do so than in the very halls where 38 years ago I used to take classes towards my Master's Degree in English?

No need to shout

I don't need to go over the content of the discussion here, since I did so in my news story on the

front page of this issue ("*Is dat goed, John?*"). What were some of my impressions as I, along with about 150 others, listened to the two-hour presentation? In spite of the classical architecture of the building and the antique desks and chairs we were occupying, the discussion was typically end-of-the-20th-century, I thought. We have come a long way as Christians to have a civil discussion, without any rancour, without shouting at each other, on what Campolo has described as a contentious issue in his book *20 Hot Potatoes Christians Are Afraid To Touch*. Of course, Tony and Peggy set the tone with their loving disagreement.

All of us seemed to support the idea that, even though we have different views on the topic, we can love and respect each other. The two Anglican groups, Fidelity and Integrity, who are traveling in opposite directions when it comes to accepting homosexual unions, are talking with each other, we were told, and celebrated communion together at their first encounter.

Of course, this is a university setting and this is the big city, I reminded myself. Where else would you have a bisexual person who claims to be a Christian stand up and dare challenge the biblical idea of monogamy? It's not always easy to decide whether people are being loving and open-minded or careless about biblical orthodoxy.

The fear of 'homogeneity'

I thought Tony Campolo did a good job of critiquing homophobia in evangelical circles, though I wondered whether this hatred/fear phenomenon is more pronounced in the U.S. than in Canada. Peggy Campolo justly reminded us that being silent while others speak negatively of homosexuals as persons makes us guilty of the same hatred and fear. If you translate homophobia as fear to speak up for the rights and dignity of our homosexual neighbors, then many in Canada and in the Christian Reformed Church can rightly be accused of being infected by the same disease. Whatever we did not do for one of those who suffer, we did not do for Jesus.

But there is a difference between guilt by association and real guilt, Patrick Hyu reminded us. Just because one is heterosexual, one need not assume the guilt of all those heterosexuals who commit hate crimes. Our guilt has to have a specific action or attitude behind it.

I agree with Tony Campolo that one can overemphasize the issue of gay sex. There are only seven or so texts in the Bible that speak out against some form of homosexuality, and Jesus never mentions homosexuality, though he does mention divorce. Should we not apply the same grace to homosexuals that we apply to divorced people? Campolo wondered. I concur, and think applying "grace" is not tantamount to approving, as Tony would agree.

But I would not draw too many conclusions, either, from the fact that Jesus does not mention same-sex relationships. I would imagine that this was not an issue in Israel. It would have been understood that same-sex relations were not to be tolerated. Whereas divorce was an issue because the Jews had found a way around the commandment not to put asunder what God had joined together. And since Jesus often spoke up against the

legalism of the Pharisees and Sadducees, he had cause to mention their views on divorce. Just the same, we do well not to create our own forms of legalism today when we deal with the lives of our homosexual neighbors.

A thin thread

I was surprised to learn that Tony Campolo based his disagreement with his wife, Peggy, solely on his view of the weight of tradition and his interpretation of Romans 1. That seemed like an awfully slender thread to me. In fact, I would not be surprised if in a year or two Campolo changes his mind on this issue. Can his narrow base resist the pressures of a more liberal social conscience which is being promoted by the groups that his wife supports?

Tradition has been wrong before. Most of us have changed our views on slavery, on absolute monarchies, on the role of labor unions and on the place of women: there was a time that Christians thought that Scripture supported opposite views to those we now hold. I don't consider 2,000 years of Scripture interpretation a thing to be carelessly tossed aside, but neither is it infallible. We need more than an appeal to tradition to hold on to the view that God does not approve of same-sex unions.

Like Patrick Hyu, I look to Genesis 1 as a weighty text that shows God's intent for the human race. And I am not at the point where I can say that Leviticus 18: 22 — "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman" — is just a purity law that was done away with when Christ came. Most of the other laws that surround this passage are still in effect, laws that forbid incest and buggery (intercourse with animals).

I reminded myself as I listened to Tony Campolo that he is a sociology professor and not first of all a Bible scholar. I like him as a promoter of the gospel of grace, but I need to be careful with him as he speaks out on the Scriptures.

No weaknesses?

What struck me, too, was that only the two advocates of heterosexual marriages acknowledged that there were weaknesses in their position. None of the other three found it necessary to admit to "soft spots." Does that mean that either their position is so right and wholesome that there are no contradictions, or are they not willing to examine them?

I thought I had discovered a weak spot. Susan Mabey told us how Romans 1 does not apply to her because it speaks of going against your nature, and she interpreted nature to mean her sexual orientation, rather than God's creational intent for her. It would be wrong for her to go against her sexual orientation, she said.

But then, what does she and others do with the challenge of the bi-sexual person, whose orientation (nature) is such that he cannot choose between a heterosexual and a homosexual partner? Why insist that he gets to pick only one flower?

It appears that my education continues. **BW**

N.B.: Christian Courier plans to focus more fully on the topic of homosexuality in a February issue.

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- ◆ provide contact for the Christian community.

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Letters

Preach, pray and listen

I find it surprising that Pastor Wildeboer builds his mandate to train pastors to be leaders on one single sentence expressed two years ago by college professor Eugene Peterson, who then said: "Spend the bulk of your time preparing the next generation of leaders." ("Oshawa pastor wants to revitalize established churches," CC, Sept. 25).

This quote is puzzling to me. It was only two years later that Prof. Peterson published his book *The Wisdom of Each Other* (1998), in which he expresses some unique criticism on the notoriety of pastors in seeing themselves as leaders. In this delightful, instructive 110-page booklet, Peterson corresponds with a fictional friend with whom he grew up.

"Gunnar" is a prominent research scientist who has come back to God and to the church after having been in rebellion to both for over 40 years. The letters are answers to Gunnar's fictional letters to Eugene in which he shares his frustration over what he finds in the church after his long absence.

To do justice to Peterson's views on revitalizing the church, I would have to quote the whole book. I hope with a few selected quotes to make my point: "So your pastor has discovered that you are 'leadership material' and is determined to

get you 'involved in ministry.' (He tells Gunnar to tell his pastor that as a Christian scientist he is in full-time ministry).

"Should you do it? By no means. Pastors are notorious for this kind of thing, but on no account should they be accommodated" (p.75).

And: "I wish I could figure out a way to get the ear of all the laypeople, God's people of North America, and tell them: 'Go to your pastors and tell them that you want them to be your preachers and intercessors period. Then lock them up in their studies and oratories'" (pp. 76, 77).

Peterson goes on to tell "God's people" that in their full-time "ministries" in the secular working world they need the help of their pastors: "...All the help you can get. But the help you need is the Word of God preached with imagination and conviction. Tell them you need to be prayed for with passion and faithfulness and listened to without distraction or hurry."

Theologian at our side

What I hear Peterson say is this: a pastor's only mandate as "leader" is that he [or she] be a "leader" as *preacher* and *intercessor* for the congregation. Peterson says to Gunnar that in our therapeutic culture, in which we are constantly reminded to "find our inner self," we

need the *theologian* at our side, much more than the counsellor. Moreover, instead of *leaders*, pastors must be *listeners* "Without distraction or hurry," they must listen to the people.

I consider it to be entirely possible that Peterson's vision of pastors as bold preachers and humble intercessors would *revitalize* believers to a greater commitment and deeper faith than Wildeboer's passion for pastors as *leaders*. If all ministers were to take as their mandate Peterson's description of a pastor, I suggest that we would not need revitalizing programs in which we are constantly encouraged to "discover" our "gifts" for "ministry."

Says Peterson: "Ministry" is organic, growing out of who we are and where we are in the circumstances in which we

know and serve Jesus; not something we impose on a person or setting as 'missions' or 'evangelism' (p. 93).

Again he says that "Christian life develops 'underground' when we aren't looking (p.57). He warns Gunnar for the epidemic of "ego spirituality" and adds that our ancestors already knew that the "paranormal" in spiritual things is far more often the work of the Devil than of the Spirit" (p.56).

My point is this: the way I read *The Wisdom of Each Other*, Peterson's ideas of *revitalizing* the church are in direct contrast with the restructuring program Wildeboer is quoted as having in mind for the Christian Reformed Church.

Trudy Joldersma
Calgary, Alta.

Use scientific language to persuade atheists

Articles like the one by Luis Palau in the Oct. 30, 1998, issue entitled "What is atheism?" are why I value my subscription to *Christian Courier*.

Indeed, if fully 18.3 per cent of humanity in 1990 claimed itself to be atheist, agnostic or non-religious, how can the Christian church reach them with the message of Christ? I have often thought that because we live in an age in which science and its techniques are supreme, (e.g. observation, data, facts,) and the scientific method has long been used to disprove the existence of God, can we not use science to prove God does exist? In other words, preach to this 18.3 per cent in a language they can understand.

In fact, it appears scientists today are doing just that. Michael Behe — author of *Darwin's Black Box* — states in his theory of "Irreducible Complexity" (which rules out natural selection as the process by which eyesight and other complex biological functions have come about) that there is proof a creator deliberately designed the world in which we live.

Perhaps the best way to convince a skeptic neighbor, co-worker or non-believing friend is to say with Blaise Pascal: What have you got to lose? Nothing, yet everything to gain if the Christian faith is true.

Bill Heeg
Hagersville, Ont.

Why absolve the government?

Mr. Wietse Posthumus' article warning against demonizing Revenue Canada is needed. However, his suggestion that the school issue is not a tax issue strikes me as strange. My neighbors send their children to the public school. That education is not counted as a taxable benefit. My children get their education at a Christian school, and — presto! — education is suddenly a taxable benefit. If Corban and CCCC are guilty of doing tricks with words, what of the government?

Mr. Posthumus' "Brief History" shows what weird and wonderful contortions of words Revenue Canada has had to perform in order to sustain what is fundamentally an inconsistent and prejudicial definition. It is true that it could have simply stonewalled instead. But when the government creates such arbitrary and elastic categories is it any wonder that private citizens do the same?

It strikes me as strange to attribute devious motives to Christian parents while absolving the Canadian government. To tax Christians for doing what they are by faith called to do while not taxing those who acquiesce to the

governmental monopoly is unjust. We are so accustomed to making this charge, we no longer hear it ourselves. It means that the government of this province does not recognize us for what we are. It is a form of discrimination. It would have raised a huge outcry if it were done on the basis of race. My problem with Mr. Posthumus' article is its tone: it is written as if the government's position were quite normal and acceptable.

An insult

Perhaps Corban did stretch a loophole out of shape. The vision driving it, however, is not of the money-launderer. This term is an insult, associating Christian parents with drug dealers. What Corban tried to develop was the vision of Christian education as the responsibility of the Christian community as a whole and not just of individual parents.

If all Christians — parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts — contributed to a single foundation in this province that funded all Christian schools, would this be considered disinterested and detached? The government condemns us to a form of self-taxation in a shadowy realm that does not fit the reality.

Let's not accept this situation as normal and let's not describe some of the creative (perhaps overly creative) ways of dealing with an abnormal set of laws as crooked.

Harry der Nederlanden
St. Catharines, Ont.

For a quick Letter to the Editor, send e-mail to: cceditor@aol.com or fax to (905) 682-8313.

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Opinion/Letter

Harry Van Belle responds

I want to thank the people who took the trouble of responding to my articles about abuse by writing a letter to the editor. I am also grateful for the opportunity to respond to these letters. My intention in writing these articles was to contribute to the so-called false memories debate by telling the readers of CC as factually and dispassionately as I could what I know about abuse.

I feel constrained to remind readers that abuse happens in our churches, even today. As a Christian counselor to whom victims of abuse turn for help I cannot ignore that fact.

I now think that was a mistake. The debate is too complex and too emotional to be fruitfully discussed in the pages of a weekly like CC. I have no desire to continue the debate.

Readers, however, are welcome to a copy of my research report on the matter. Just write me c/o The King's University College, 9125 50 St., Edmonton, AB, T6B 2H3. In addition, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies has published a very balanced overview of the research relating to the issue of recalling traumatic

memories. It is called "Childhood Trauma Remembered." This report ends by urging therapists to be extremely careful when dealing with situations in which the possibility of abuse exists. With this I fully agree. Readers can obtain a copy of this report by writing to: ISTSS, 60 Revere Drive, Suite 500, Northbrook, IL 60062.

The pain is real

I am having some trouble with how to respond to the two letters of the people who, for very understandable reasons, wished to remain anonymous. To them I want to say: My heart goes out to you. I know what it feels like to have someone you love get hurt. As a teenager our daughter was sexually assaulted by people in the church. To this day she is still struggling with the effects of this abuse. She has left the church and is no longer a Christian.

To be abused is horrible. To be falsely accused of abusing someone is also horrible. The pain we feel for our daughter goes deep. The pain you feel for the one you love who was falsely accused and the pain you feel for your family goes equally deep. If I in any way made you feel that your suffering is not important, I ask you to forgive me.

At the same time, I feel constrained to remind readers that abuse happens in our churches,

even today. As a Christian counselor to whom victims of abuse turn for help I cannot ignore that fact. And I would like us to be equally passionate about that problem. We may not let our legitimate concern for the effects of false accusations obscure the fact that we must do everything we can to prevent abuse from happening.

There are still too many people who do not believe abuse is a problem in our churches. Those people need to educate themselves about abuse. A good start would be for them to attend a conference on abuse like the one that was held in Edmonton last month.

Preventing abuse

There are also still too many churches which have not yet formulated and implemented an abuse prevention policy. I urge them to do so soon. The safety of our children demands it.

The Christian Reformed Church, for one, has come up with a mechanism for dealing with accusations of abuse in the churches that also has the potential of handling false accusations better.

The denomination is asking each classis to form an abuse response team (ART). This ART consists of 10-15 trusted members from various congregations in a given classis. One of the tasks this team has is to function as an advisory panel for the

council of a congregation when an accusation of abuse is made against an office bearer in that congregation.

When asked by the church council, this advisory panel meets once to hear the accusation and another time to hear the response to the accusation by the accused. It then deliberates to determine the probability that the abuse took place and also to determine the gravity of the abuse.

The panel does not decide anything. It only gives advice to the council, which has the task of deciding whether or not the abuse took place. This ART

panel has its limitations in that it can only deal with accusations against officebearers, but it is a step in the right direction. For one thing, if it functions properly, it can be trusted to be completely objective, fair and confidential in its deliberations.

My hope is that every classis will form an abuse response team and that every classis will also utilize this team. It is my prayer that this ART will become so respected that people will voluntarily turn to it when faced with a dispute about abuse.

Harry Van Belle
Edmonton, Alta.

Veterans deserve better

I am very disturbed that the churches I know didn't have a moment of silence to remember the veterans. There wasn't even an article in *Christian Courier*. Even the beer store was open! We did observe a moment of silence in our church, but that was because I asked for it. One of our members wrote an article because he was in the forces.

The soldiers stood tall and walked proudly into combat. It was 80 years ago when World War I came to an end. In another five or 10 years people won't observe Remembrance day.

When I grew up, we always went to church on Remembrance Day. I went to the services at the cenotaph. It was so nice to hear over 150 people singing "O, Canada," "God Save the Queen," "Abide With Me" and "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," hymns we don't sing now at church.

How many people know anything about Cambrai, Ypres, Passchendaele, Moens, mustard gas, eating rats to survive, trench feet, and skin coming off your feet when you took your socks off? Our veterans survived this, and they deserve our respect by giving them a moment of silence once a year.

Dutch immigrants make a big thing about the Liberation of Holland. Why not about the armistice 80 years ago? We owe our freedom to the soldiers. Read books about them. Look at them on TV. Go to the Veteran's hospital. They deserve a moment of silence.

I am very proud to say that my dad, during World War II, was the farthest to the front when Armistice came. He was wounded, came back with a stomach ailment and deafness. He received \$34 a month for defending his country.

He was a wonderful dad and he deserves to be remembered — he and other soldiers. Lest we forget. May God richly bless the veterans and their families.

R. Kessler
Richmond Hill, Ont.

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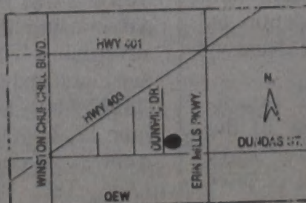
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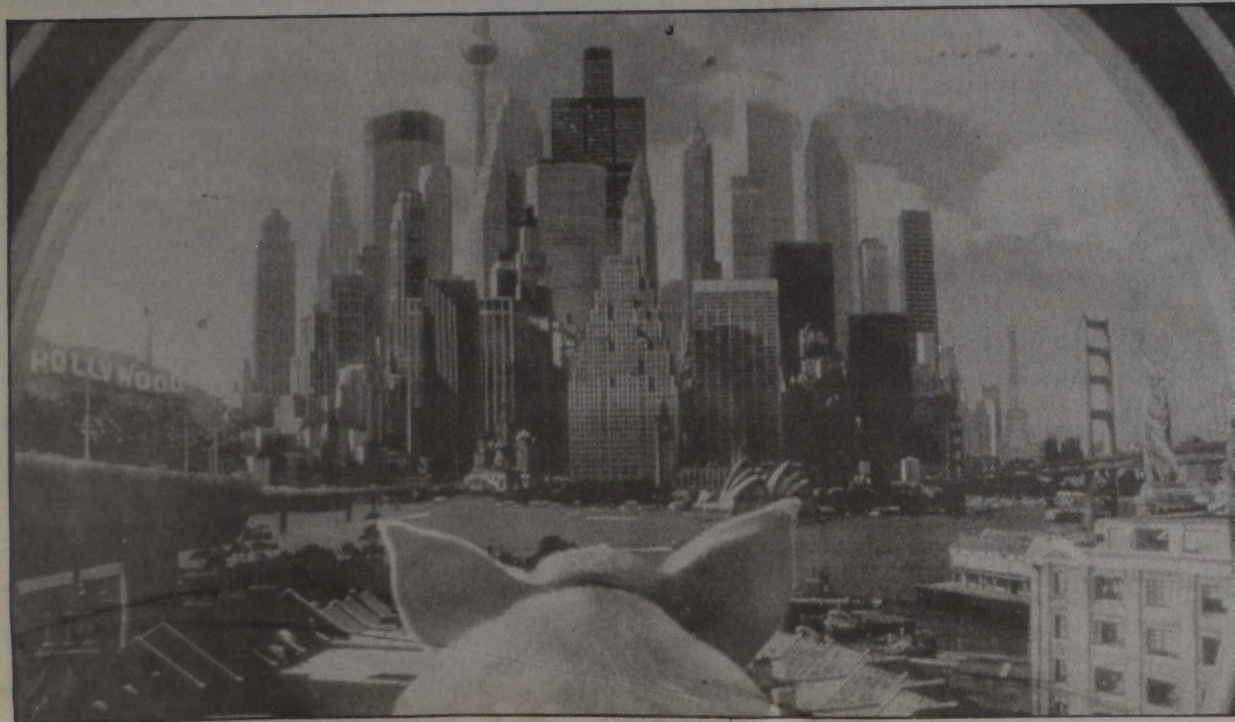
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Arts/Media

Film Review

'How a kind and steady heart can save the world'

Babe arrives at a composite big city, with several familiar landmarks.

arian Van Til

Babe: Pig in the City

Rated: Family. Written by George Miller, Judy Morris and Mark Lamprell. Directed by George Miller. Stars Magda Szubanski, James Cromwell and Mickey Rooney.

Babe: Pig in the City is a sequel to the delightful, just plain *Babe*, which came out in 1995. *Babe*, recall, is a runt piglet who is saved from becoming human dinner when he is discovered to be the next best thing to a sheep dog. He lives in some strangely

out-of-time country (neatly described in the current film as "somewhere left of the 20th century"), on some vaguely fairytale sort of farm with his diffident master, farmer A.G. Hoggett and Hoggett's talkative wife.

And at the end of the story we left "Pig," as Hoggett calls him, basking in an exulting crowd at the fair after having won a sheep herding contest for his proud owner.

The laconic Hoggett's approving, "That'll do, Pig," is the highest praise Babe could ever hope to hear, and we exited the theatre with a smile on our faces (remembering the smile on Babe's snout) the phrase echoing pleasantly in our (and his) ears.

Now the sequel:

Everything is going swimmingly with the talking animals and their master and mistress until Babe and the always-tinkering Hoggett fall into the well. Hoggett (Australian actor James Cromwell) needs a long time to mend, and things on the farm gradually go to seed. At which point the dreaded Bankers step in, poised to foreclose on the mortgage.

But Pig is still a celebrity and still getting mail and invitations from all over the world. So Mrs. Hoggett (Magda Szubanski) and Pig will fly to a far corner of the globe to participate in an event that will bring in a monetary harvest large enough to save the farm. But the best laid plans of mice and men — and pigs....

Innocents abroad

Mrs. Hoggett and Pig arrive uneventfully at the airport in No-Name City, whose landmarks combine those of New York, Paris, Sydney, Seattle and

a host of cities. But, alas, they miss their connecting flight. (Why they miss it is laid out in one of the many bittersweet comic set pieces of this sweet-natured, comic film.) They are stuck in the forbidding city for two days while they wait for another flight.

Mrs. H. and Pig end up at a one-of-a-kind hotel, the only place in this strange urban fairground-of-sorts which allows pigs. Besides the odd proprietor and her performing uncle (Mickey Rooney), their hotel mates are a handful of dogs, one of

whom is handicapped; several dozen singing cats; a show-business family of chimps, an orangutan and another monkey; and a goldfish.

Not surprisingly, no sooner do the guileless Mrs. H. and sweetly naive Pig (truly a Babe in the city) arrive, than things seem to go awry. They get separated; Pig is bamboozled by the showbiz crowd; chased by a mad pitbull; and suffers sundry other calamities. But no matter what, he always repays evil with kindness.

When Mrs. H. is trundled away in a paddy wagon (watch the film to see why), and the uncle requires hospital care, and the hotel proprietor/niece leaves to visit him, the animals must fend for themselves.

But the neighbors are animal haters; and things do not go well for our non-human friends. (In a delicious running joke, the stereotypical loud neighbors with the incessant boombox are not rock music lovers but opera lovers — and are eventually paid back, if not exactly in kind, when the hotel is rented out as a rock/disco joint called Dance-land.)

Pig, with his kind heart, becomes the focal point in the animals' world, and eventually saves both them and himself — and his humans' farm — from what seemed like certain doom.

What makes this film, like the first, so delightful is its intelligence, and its obvious respect

for its audience's intelligence. It's a kids' movie; but like all the best of that genre, it deliberately contains great fodder to feed the adults who bring the kids: puns that make you smirk, satiric asides, amusing sight gags for the initiated, and funny historical and literary references. (In that, the closest parallel that comes to mind is the old "Rocky and Bulwinkle" TV cartoon show.) There are scenes which will be scary for young children, it should be noted.

The enchanting three-mouse "Greek chorus" of the first film is back, too, still sounding like Alvin the Chipmunk and Friends, and still announcing the "chapter" titles and showing up in a diverting manner at just the right time to be the most winsome.

Labor of love

A lot of film sequels are merely bald attempts at raking in more money for their makers and producers. This one, like the original film, seems a labor of love. (Oddly, given how well-loved the first film was, this one, I've heard, is not, so far, doing well at the box office. That may be partly because it has quite a bit of animated — in both senses of the word — competition in the theatres at the moment.

Of course, this sequel cannot have the impact of the original because we are now in on the joke; and the humorous and clever innovations will never hit us as did those of the first film.

Yet there's plenty of originality here, and the spirit of *Babe: Pig in the City* is as gentle and sweet-tempered as the first one was, as a good children's movie or story should be (the other current animated theatre offerings — *Antz* and *A Bug's Life* are crass and nasty in comparison).

This segment of Pig's story is, as the narrator tells us near the beginning, about "how a kind and steady heart can save the world."

As this second film ends, we hear a musical variation (courtesy Randy Newman) on that theme and on Hoggett's words of praise which warmed Pig's heart at the end of Part I: "A kind and steady heart may not seem much to you, but 'that'll do.'" That's a message from the media that both Christian and secular parents need not screen from their children.

Christmas cards from the 'too busy' go back 150 years

DALLAS, Tex. (EP) — What is believed to be one of the first mass-produced Christmas cards — dating back more than 150 years — can be found among the extensive special collections of Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology.

Approximately 1,000 copies of the card were printed, but only 10 have survived to modern times. Bridwell Library acquired its copy in 1982. The card was designed for Henry Cole by his friend, the English painter John Calcott Horsley (1808-1882).

Cole wanted a ready-to-mail greeting card because he was too busy to engage in the traditional English custom of writing notes with Christmas and New Year's greetings to friends and family. Cole, who also wrote and published Christmas books, printed more cards than he needed so he sold the extra cards for one shilling each.

Widespread commercial printing of Christmas cards began in the 1860s, when a new process of color printing lowered the manufacturing cost and the price.

Church

Christian suffering in India worst in 50 years



An Evangelical Church of India service in Madras (above) and a Catholic church in Mysore (photo on right). Both Catholics and Protestants are suffering from increased persecution in India.

GUJARAT State, India (religiontoday.com) — Persecution of Christians in India is reported to be at its highest level in 50 years. Mobs of religious fanatics have attacked churches and Christian schools, dispersed outdoor gospel meetings and beaten evangelists in dozens of incidents this year.

Oppression is widespread, a person with contacts in the country told Religion Today. There were at least 33 incidents of violence in 11 of India's 25 states in 1998, much of it in Gujarat, a

predominantly Hindu state that lies in west-central India, he said.

Churches have been burned in the villages of Bhapkal, Singana, Lahan Kadmad, and Borkhal, the *Los Angeles Times* has reported. An Orthodox school in Naroda was attacked for failing to teach Sanskrit, the language of Hindu literature. A gang of Hindus invaded a Christian girls' school in Rajkot and burned its Bibles. In Naroda, 400 people used tractors and crowbars to destroy a Catholic church.

Twenty-five men raped four Indian Catholic nuns in Navapada, Mahydra Pradesh, in September, news reports said. The men surrounded a convent and told the nuns to come out, promising not to hurt them, then led them to a nearby field. "Tonight you are our wives," the attackers reportedly said. Catholic leaders believe high-ranking Hindus encouraged the mob.

Hindu state emboldens attackers

The government's goal of making India a Hindu state is the cause of increased persecution, many believe. Attacks on Christians rose after the radical Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party came to national power eight months ago.

The BJP, whose slogan is "One nation, one people, one culture," has called Christianity a foreign religion and a holdover from the colonial era. The BJP came to power with promises to make India a world power by uniting its people under Hinduism and developing nuclear arms. Prime Minister Shri Bajpayee is a member, as are several top ministers in the ruling government.

National opposition to Christianity has emboldened state governments. "They feel more comfortable persecuting Christians on the local level because there is no fear of reprisals," the person with contacts in the country told Religion Today. Some states have passed anti-conversion laws, and violence against Christians is seldom prosecuted. Attacks have been organized and led by government leaders, witnesses say.

"There is a pattern to these attacks and I am convinced that they are being orchestrated from

above," said John Dayal of the All India Catholic Union.

Government leaders have denied that they support the attacks and promised to investigate. Some Hindu organizations have disavowed attacks while justifying them. The rape of the nuns was wrong, but a "natural reaction" to years of forced conversions by missionaries, said B.L. Sharma of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a civic organization. Christians declared Dec. 4 a day of prayer and were encouraged to stay home from work and attend a rally in New Delhi. A delegation of Christian leaders made a formal protest to the president, prime minister and home minister.

Martyrdom not a distant nightmare

Christianity is spreading into northern India. The apostle Thomas is said to have brought Christianity to southern India 2,000 years ago, but the church's influence thins in the central regions.

In some northern states there may be "one Christian for every 22 million people," the person with contacts in the country said. Christian evangelists and others are bringing the gospel to these areas for the first time. The areas are Hindu "political and spiritual strongholds," so the persecution is greater, he said. "Workers are constantly told to leave or be killed. Leaders have a price on

their heads from anti-Christian groups."

The workers trust God for their protection. They "take the threats before the Lord in fasting and prayer and ask him to protect them." Christians have been



beaten, tortured with razor blades, and thrown from a speeding train, and six to 12 per year are martyred, he said.

Hundreds of tribal people in a section of northern India are becoming Christians through the efforts of evangelists. The area is known for violent tribal clashes. "It is the greatest revival we know of at this time," he said. "You don't get this kind of revival without persecution, and bloodshed and martyrdom. One comes with the other."

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Lutherans and Catholics still close to agreement on justification

ROME (REC) — When the Lutheran churches first heard the Roman Catholic reaction to a proposed common declaration on the doctrine of justification by faith, they were disappointed. Now, according to Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a letter from the Vatican clarifies the issues.

Cardinal Edward Cassidy, head of the Pontifical Council for the

promotion of Christian Unity, explained that the Catholic Church had a two-level response.

The first part of the response, called *Declaration*, is the official response to the question of the joint declaration. A second part, called *Clarification*, "has a completely different value to that of the *Declaration*," according to Cassidy.

Noko sent this information to the member churches of the

LWF, and he pointed out that Cassidy's emphasis is that the Catholic Church could affirm and sign the *Joint Declaration*.

The proposal says that "a consensus on basic truths of the doctrine of justification has been reached." The section on *Clarifications*, Noko wrote, points out the need for further discussion.

Church

The presence of the future

"Your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10a, NIV)

"But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:28, NIV)

The first of these two sentences is very familiar, since it is part of the Lord's Prayer — the model prayer which Jesus Christ himself taught us to pray. The Lord himself asks us to pray for the coming of his Kingdom, i.e., his lordship, his sovereignty, over our lives. This active sense of the word "kingdom" (perhaps "kingship" would be a better translation) is captured well in the explanation which the *Heidelberg Catechism* gives of these words: "Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to you."

The second sentence is also a quotation from Christ himself. It occurs in the context of a dispute which he had with the Pharisees about the meaning of his exorcisms. The Pharisees claimed that he cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub. Not so, said Jesus, a kingdom divided against itself (the devil also lays claims to kingship, and the demons are part of his evil empire) cannot stand.

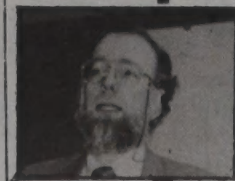
'Already' and 'not yet'

Instead, Christ's exorcisms, which he accomplished by the power of the Spirit, prove something about a different kingdom altogether. They prove that the long-awaited public manifestation of the Kingdom of Yahweh has finally arrived. In the person and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, the Kingdom of God had arrived already.

But there is something odd about these two different utterances by Jesus. The first assumes that the kingdom had *not* arrived in Jesus' own day, and the second assumes that it had *already* arrived.

New Testament scholars in the past have spilled a lot of ink on trying to settle the question which of these positions was the one which the historical Jesus really held. Fortunately, today there is widespread agreement among biblical scholars (as there has been among ordinary believers for centuries) that Jesus held that the Kingdom of God was both present and future, and that these two views are not contradictory. In the person of Christ the Kingdom has indeed come,

Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
• Al Wolters

but its full realization is still a matter of the future.

This peculiar feature of Christ's teaching concerning the Kingdom of God is, in fact, not peculiar at all. It is part of the basic structure of the biblical story. This one over-arching biblical narrative is characterized throughout by the "presence of the future," that is, by the reality already in the present — wherever that present might be on the time-line of redemptive history — of the great blessings promised by God in the future.

The Old Testament saints, by way of anticipation, already experienced salvation in Jesus Christ. The prophets already experienced something of the glory which was to come. The Spirit which fell on select individuals in the Old Covenant was a kind of foretaste of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out (as Joel had prophesied) on all believers. The presence of God among his people in tabernacle and temple was the "already" of the "not yet" of the new temple of God's dwelling in the Body of Christ.

Theologians have a fancy name for this basic structure of the biblical narrative. They speak of the "redemptive-historical-eschatological" character of world history as presented by the Bible. This is quite a mouthful. But the reality to which it refers is understood by every child of God. We have a foretaste now, even in a world still groaning under the weight of sin, of the great future which God has in store for us. What we have already is a sample — a kind of deposit or down payment, and thus a guarantee — of what is yet to come. In Christ, the future is now.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario. He is working on a commentary on the book of Zechariah, which in many ways anticipates the Messianic future.

Seventy churches destroyed in Nigeria this year

Obed Minchakpu

JOS, Nigeria (Compass) — Approximately 70 churches have been burned during the last 12 months in Nasarawa state, and conflict between Christian and Muslim ethnic groups continues to escalate, reports the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA).

"Churches were usually vandalized before they were set ablaze," ECWA Pastor Majah Sani told Compass. "These churches were set ablaze by the Muslim Igbirras."

Violent clashes that began in November 1997 between the Muslim Igbirra ethnic group and the predominantly Christian Bassa ethnic group have resulted in thousands of deaths. The ECWA said 52 pastors have been displaced and two have been killed. In addition, 5,000 Christians have been displaced or killed.

The conflict between the Muslim Igbirras and the Christian Bassas allegedly began as a result of government political policies that favored Muslims over Christians.

Squabbling chiefs

An ECWA committee investigating the cause of the conflict reported: "As in the case of Nasarawa, the Bassa and Gbaji (Christian communities) that are more populated do not have a recognized chief (leader), while Igbirra (Muslim community), with lesser population, has two recognized chiefs. This is one of the reasons the two communities have never seen peace in the present time."

The report listed other contributory factors to the conflict, including Muslim political leaders being appointed over predominantly Christian areas, the use of public funds to build mosques on government property,

preventing Christian religious instruction in schools while allowing Islamic religious teaching, and a Muslim-dominated media.

A Nigerian news magazine, *Northern Nigeria In Perspective* (NNIP), echoed the ECWA report, stating, "The Igbirra and Bassa in the last 10 years have not known any peace. The Igbirra have two chiefdoms while the majority Bassa have none." NNIP blamed the government's inability to encourage co-existence between religious and ethnic groups for the increasing wave of conflicts.

Government favors Islam

The general church council of the ECWA issued a statement demanding the end to Christian persecution in Nigeria. It stated, "In the course of our deliberations here, we reflected over the prevailing religious atmosphere in the country. We have discovered that over the years, many innocent lives were lost to religious disturbances, and places of worship destroyed. While the Nigeria Constitution guarantees freedom of religious liberty, we have observed that the government has been promoting Islam over and above Christianity." Rev. Victor Musa, the ECWA president, signed the statement.

Major towns and villages affected by the crisis include Toto, Sardauna, Umaisha, Paseli, Daggi, Ugya, Segye, Yerwa and Gadabuke. Churches destroyed during the crisis belonged to the ECWA, the Baptist Convention, the Roman Catholic Church, Qua Iboe Church, Deeper Life Church, and the Pentecostal Church.

Nigerian churches have responded to the crisis in Toto Local Government Area by sending relief materials to the affected Christians.

Communist government in Cuba reinstates Christmas holiday

HAVANA, Cuba (EP) — Christmas has returned to Cuba. On Dec. 1 the island nation's Communist Party used the entire front page of Cuba's daily newspaper, *Granma*, to recommend that "from this year on" Dec. 25 be recognized as a holiday in Cuba. The "recommendation" assures that the government will adopt the policy.

Christmas was banned in 1970 when the Communist government declared that the holiday interfered with the sugar harvest. The government insisted that Christmas was not being banned because

of its religious significance, but the ban came at a time when the government was forcing Christians from sensitive jobs and was discouraging Christmas trees.

In more recent years, Cuba's government has taken to describing itself as "secular" rather than as "atheist," and has taken small steps toward normalizing relations with religious groups.

Christmas made a one-time return last year to honor the then upcoming visit of Pope John Paul II, but even so, the Communist Party was hesitant to announce a permanent restoration of the

holiday.

The U.S. State Department welcomed Cuba's reinstatement of Christmas, and urged Cuban President Fidel Castro to give his people gifts including "democracy, respect for human rights and economic freedom." State Department Spokesperson James P. Rubin recalled "the grinch named Mr. Castro who stole Christmas" and said, "One can only be thankful" for the return of Christmas in Cuba. Still, he noted, "It would be hardly fair to call Cuba a country that provides full religious liberty."

Lutherans again court Episcopalians

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which last year turned down a joint ministry and sacrament agreement with the Episcopal Church, is seeking approval for a new agreement designed to address concerns from conservatives within the church.

Under the new proposal, Lutheran bishops will not be appointed for life and will not be able to ordain new pastors after stepping down from their posts —

both of which had been parts of the earlier proposal. Under the agreement ELCA bishops will become part of the Episcopal Church's "historic episcopacy," an ordination ritual stretching back to the early church.

Last August's "Concordat of Agreement" was approved overwhelmingly by the Episcopal Church, but fell just short of passage at the ELCA's annual conference.

Feature

Friendship knows no barriers

Dana M. Widsten

Every once in a while we encounter something that we are not prepared for. I was 22 on the night it happened and I was not prepared. In a split second my life was altered in a way that I would never have imagined.

Marcelle and Emile were my neighbors across the hall in our apartment building. Emile (at the age of 70) had finally retired after many years working as an exporter of Egyptian goods. Marcelle spent her time working for the poor with the Catholic nuns who ran a school for boys in Cairo. Marcelle was my first friend in Egypt.

I had been out shopping and was putting my key in the door when Marcelle called out to me. Her voice made the hairs on my neck stand on end and it took several moments to understand what she was saying. With great trepidation and fear I took her hand and went into her apartment. "I believe Emile has died," she said. "What do you think?"

My mind was screaming. What did I think? I couldn't think at all, and finding myself unable to speak I squeezed her hand and led her from the room.

It is moments like this that one feels absolutely useless. Words seem so inadequate and empty. Everything I said felt stilted and awkward. So I gave up and held her for a long time.

If I were "home," I would have picked up the phone and dialed 911, and everything would have been taken care of. But I was in Egypt and we did not have an ambulance service; and more importantly, neither Marcelle nor myself had a phone. It was then I realized that whatever had to be done I was going to have to do.

Unfamiliar conditions

A thousand details flooded my mind. Was there such a thing as a funeral home here? And if there was, where was it? I had never seen one. What about a doctor? or the police? Didn't we have to report this? Where does one find a doctor at night other than the hospital on the other side of town (an hour's drive away)? Did the doctors in Egypt work at night? On and on it went until finally I realized that I had to get help.

This was another dilemma. Who would know what to do? Certainly none of my friends, as they were all expatriates like myself. I felt as if I were drowning when it finally occurred to me that there was one person I could turn to for help.

Madre was the Mother Superior of the school for boys where Marcelle worked so tirelessly. The Nuns depended upon donations to keep the school running. They provided everything for the boys:



I had been out shopping....

food, lodging, education.

I had visited the sisters many times with Marcelle. These women were amazing. They had none of the modern conveniences. All of their wash was done by hand. The Sisters' hands were continuously chapped from the endless hours of scrubbing sheets, socks, shirts. But none ever muttered a word of complaint.

The Madre was a remarkable woman. She spoke six languages fluently; but English was not one of them. When we had had tea with her and the other sisters, Marcelle had acted as translator, bouncing between French, Italian, Arabic and English. On this night it was the Madre I would go to for help.

The language barrier

Not wanting to leave Marcelle alone, I got another neighbor to stay with her until I got back. When I arrived at the school it was dark, quiet and the gates were locked. After driving around the block I began to think that I would have to climb the fence when I saw lights on at the far end of the building.

I could hear voices inside as I went through the door. Hearing and seeing me approach they stopped talking. In my best Arabic I asked for the Madre. No one moved. I asked again: could they please take me to the Madre. Finally one man nodded and led me down the hall.

The Madre rushed towards me and I

began to tell her in English that Emile had died. After several attempts I realized that she did not understand a word of what I was saying. She was trying, but it was useless.

In frustration I cried out, "Does anybody here speak English?" And when the gentleman who had escorted me said, "I do," I burst into tears for the first time and cried my heart out.

This gentleman turned out to be a priest. The Madre gasped hearing my news and called two sisters to come with us. With five of us in my car it was crowded, and as I sped out a hand patted mine and said in broken English: "It's okay," and motioned for me to slow down. She was right — everything was okay.

Refusal to live

Several days after the funeral Marcelle went into a profound depression. She stayed in bed all day and hardly ate a thing. She did not bathe or comb her hair, and other than Hussein (her houseboy) and myself, she would not speak to anyone. Even the Madre was turned away. The days turned to weeks and Marcelle continued to deteriorate. I visited her several times a day. Hussein would make me coffee and bring it to me at her bedside.

Most days mine was the only voice I heard. I tried to coax Marcelle out of bed

but she would not budge. She told me that she didn't want to live without Emile.

In desperation one morning I decided that something had to be done. I could not let this go on any longer. So that morning I marched into Marcelle's room and told her that if she didn't get out of bed right now I was never going to visit her again.

She brushed me aside by turning away from me, so I went around the bed and looked her in the eye and repeated my threat. In a quivering voice she said that she would get up tomorrow.

"No," I said, "You'll get up today!" After what seemed like hours she muttered, "Okay." I helped her put her robe and slippers on and hollered to Hussein that we would have coffee in the living room.

Marcelle stayed out of bed just long enough to have coffee and then bolted back to bed. I let her go. It was a huge step towards recovery.

Discovery

As the days passed we continued the routine. I threatened not to visit, and got her hair washed. The next step was a bath and eating lunch at the table. It was one step at a time but we were making progress.

One morning I knocked at her door for my usual morning check-up and when I saw Marcelle standing there I whooped with delight and wrapped my arms around her. My wonderful friend was back.

It took some time for Marcelle to adjust to her new life. As we packed Emile's clothes to give the poor, Marcelle began to talk about their life together. Every precious object had a story — the suit that was worn to the opening of their shop; the ring she had given him for his 50th birthday, and so on. When the last box was packed she put her hand on the top and caressed it. In a quiet, quivering voice she said, "I still miss him, you know. I think I always will. But I remembered something you said the other day."

"What was that?" I asked.

"You said that even though Emile wasn't here he would live on in my memories and my heart. I believe you. Would you like to know something else?"

"Sure," I said as she reached out for my hand.

"Only half of my heart is for Emile."

And after a long pause she added: "The other half is for you."

Diane Widsten lives in Sechelt, B.C.

Feature

A casual beginning with life-changing consequences

James Kwantes

I first spoke to her on the phone in December 1996. Shannon Morrison was a communications student at the local college, and she had telephoned *The Abbotsford News* to talk to a reporter about career possibilities in the media.

The receptionist transferred the call to me on a busy mid-December day, when news is hard to come by but thrice-weekly deadlines persist.

With more immediate concerns on my mind — one of those deadlines approaching with the speed of a cyclone — I told Ms. Morrison to phone back in the new year and promised I would meet with her over coffee then. An eligible bachelor at the time, I looked forward to meeting the girl with the friendly, inquisitive voice on the other end of the phone line.

It turned out I happened to be out of the office when Shannon phoned the second time in early January, so all I got was a handwritten note with her name and phone number on it.

Shannon who?

By this time, I had forgotten about our conversation and had no idea who this "Shannon" was. As a busy reporter in a newsroom with stretched resources I was a trifle annoyed at getting this note with no message attached. I phoned her number and left a curt message on her answering machine: "Hi, this is James from the *Abbotsford News*, I'm not sure why you called, but I'm returning your call."

When she returned my call, I remembered, and we arranged to meet at 10 a.m. on Saturday, January 11 in a nearby coffee shop.

I arrived at about 9:50, ordered a coffee and grabbed a newspaper. Soon it was 10:15, then 10:30. I was beginning to wonder if this "Shannon" girl was going to show up. I wasn't too upset, however, as it was a day off anyway and I was in a lazy mood.

Finally, at 10:45, a young woman with a panicked look on her face hurried through the front door, introduced herself as Shannon and apologized profusely. She had danced the previous night away in Vancouver to celebrate her birthday, and had slept in.

A worthwhile wait

We talked, had coffee, talked some more; and I ended up giving her a tour through the nearby News building and printing press. As we parted ways, she accepted an invitation to dinner.

On Nov. 7 of this year, I married her in front of the receptionist who had first "hooked us up" and about 140 friends and relatives from B.C., Ontario and

Alabama. Shannon's parents flew in from Tokyo for the wedding.

When we had set our wedding date for Nov. 7, we resigned ourselves to the likelihood that it would be raining on the Wet Coast that day. We were surprised and pleased to be blessed with a bright, sunny, beautiful fall day. God was smiling down on us, it seemed.

If our courtship was not a smooth ride from start to finish, neither was the honeymoon. In the midst of the pre-wedding stress, a storm called Hurricane Mitch hit Central America with a vengeance. A week before the wedding, the hurricane was heading for our honeymoon destination south of Cancun and newspapers were featuring photos of devastation and of alarmed tourists fleeing to the nearest airport.

We felt terrible, with the death toll from the hurricane in the thousands and rising, about flying to the Yucatan peninsula for a one-week honeymoon at an all-inclusive resort. We visited our travel agent, who glibly assured us that the worst of the storm had passed, that our resort destination was still standing, and that feelings of guilt were not grounds for getting a refund on the trip.

While not big "resort" fans, Shannon and I ended up having a great week — after a rocky start. My right ear plugged

up on the descent into Cancun, causing excruciating pain as the airplane descended. Dog-tired from the excitement of the wedding and from the flight, Shannon and I were forced to endure drunken revellers being fed \$2 (US) Corona "cervezas" by a young Mexican entrepreneur during the one-hour bus ride from the airport to the hotel. Those who characterize Americans as "obnoxious" and Canadians as "polite" obviously hadn't travelled with this crowd.

After checking into the hotel and unpacking our luggage, Shannon's mouth began hurting. While hesitant to seek medical assistance in this foreign land, my new wife was shedding tears of pain so I phoned the front desk and was told a doctor would be contacted.

Alls well that ends well

About half an hour later, Dr. Jose Munoz arrived, carrying a leather satchel full of medical tools and remedies. Visions of used needles and mis-diagnosed prescriptions quickly subsided, as Munoz spoke some English and seemed competent and professional.

I watched, with equal parts curiosity and horror, as he unwrapped a (new) needle, filled it with an unknown painkilling substance, and sank it into my wife's bum. Half an hour later, she was

sleeping soundly. I paid the doctor in American dollars and thanked him. He opined that the air pressure on the flight had disturbed recent dental work she'd had performed, a seemingly plausible explanation.

Shannon's mouth didn't bother her again, my ear eventually unplugged, and we spent the remainder of our honeymoon playing in the ocean, snorkelling, touring Mayan ruins and visiting a charming fishing village called Playa del Carmen, just minutes away from the hotel.

We have now re-entered normal life after a few weeks of fun and adventure. Through it all, from the "blind date" to the excitement of the wedding to the Mexican medicine man, we have sensed God's hand guiding us. We also suspect he has a sense of humor, and hope to keep laughing with him in our journey through life together.

James Kwantes is an Abbotsford, B.C.-based journalist. He has been writing for Christian Courier for several years but met editor Bert Witvoet for the first time at a June Faith and Media conference at Carlton University. It was at that conference that Bert persuaded him to share with CC readers how he met his then future wife.



Feature

Being a friend during times of serious illness

Lynn Klammer

"Facing death was difficult," remembers Leslie, "but if I hadn't had my friends beside me, it would have really been impossible." Leslie is just one of many young people who will become seriously ill this year. Even though accidents are still the leading cause of death among young people, disease will claim a large number of lives as well. For example, cancer alone accounts for 1,500 young lives each year and is still the leading cause of death from disease for one to 15 year olds.

Bob, who lives in Saginaw, Mich., was 11 years old when he was first diagnosed. Over the course of several years, he was eventually found to have four different types of brain cancer. "I was very scared that I would die," says Bob. "I was also scared for my mom... because I knew that I was her only child and she would have a hard time living without me." Bob adds, "It was most difficult facing the loss of my freedom, losing my girlfriend, losing friends, and accepting death."

If you know someone who has been diagnosed with a life-threatening disease, you may be feeling uncomfortable around that person and be uncertain how to offer help through this difficult time. Learning what it's like for someone who has a serious illness can help you to be a positive, supportive presence in your friend's life. Remember, sharing the good times is easy, but the true test of friendship comes during the hard times.

Confront your feelings

If you have a friend who is ill, you may experience mixed feelings. Maybe you feel like you should be able to help your friend, and your helplessness makes you angry. Sister Anne Ragan, MSSp, is a Medical Social Worker in Saginaw, Mich., who has worked with many dying individuals and their families. She suggests that anger in both the patient and their family and friends is a common reaction.

"If you want to get mad at God that's okay," says Sr. Anne. "Just let yourself experience whatever you're feeling and try to focus on

what you treasure about your friendship in the here and now." Sr. Anne adds "Talk about how wonderful life is with that person, and just get it all out — allow yourself reverence and respect for your feelings and don't judge yourself."

Control your fear

As a friend of someone who is seriously ill, it's most important that you not allow fear or insecurity to keep you from being supportive. Bob encourages friends to just "be there for the person, don't treat him like he's not there.... Talk to the person about his condition ... and when the person needs someone to talk to, let him."

Bob remembers, "Most of my friends were worried that they would catch the illness that I had so I don't see them anymore. I felt like I was all alone and deserted. I felt like I had no friends left in the world. I really did not want to live."

It's especially in times of difficulty that we need our friends. So being abandoned by them at

such a time can only make the situation all the more painful.

Rosemary Kroll, a professional counsellor in Saginaw, Mich., suggests that "the gift of your time to your terminally ill friend is probably the best you can give. Many people stop coming around when they hear a friend is dying. They may not know what to say and are afraid they will make their friend sad. When this happens, the terminally ill teen may feel abandoned. Your friend will let you know if they want to hear about the parties or games, etc., you are going to, or if they just want to sit and play computer games with you. If being with your friend is making you sad, talk to someone who understands and can support you, like a parent, teacher or school counsellor."

Sr. Anne encourages friends and family to "listen with great respect and remember that whatever they're feeling is real for them. Encourage them to keep talking. Love them, hug them, and if you don't have an answer, don't worry. Sometimes I find that even I don't know what to say to a



patient, so before I go in to see a patient I sometimes say, 'Lord you have to take charge of my tongue,' and sometimes I'm surprised by what comes out."

Talking about God and praying can be comforting things to do, but sometimes a patient would rather avoid any religious discussion. Sr. Anne remembers, "One patient told me, 'Don't talk to me about God, I hate him. He let this happen to me.'"

Don't force faith

In such cases it's important to remember that "God knows deep down that what you really hate is this happening to you — he understands." Sr. Anne adds, "Don't pray unless they've given permission. Everyone has to find God in his or her own way. I never worry about God. God loves us all and understands what's in our hearts. If you find it difficult to understand why your friend is acting the way he is, just remember that sometimes God writes straight with crooked lines."

Sometimes I'll tell a patient, 'You're too tired to pray. Just snuggle up in God's arms and let him hug you and know that he's there.'"

As in Leslie's case, some people feel guilty about their negative feelings toward God as a result of their illness, or they may feel they are being punished for some past sins, but Sr. Anne reminds us: "God just wants you to be you — God doesn't want you to feel any pain — no penance is due for your past."

Letting God in

Eventually, after working through all the denial, fear, anger and deal-making, a person usually

comes to some level of acceptance of his or her situation. "After the second surgery," says Bob, "the doctor wanted to do radical chemotherapy on my head and spine for a year and a half. But my mom and I took a walk in the park and decided that I wanted to have quality over quantity of life, so we decided against the chemotherapy. The doctors said I had a 15 per cent chance to live six months." Bob was later found to be cancer free. He's now 21 years old and "healthy as a horse." Bob adds that what helped him most were "God, the prayers of others, my family, and my hope."

Leslie is also now healthy, and she plans to honor her "deal" with God by choosing a career in the helping professions. She remembers, "I had one really good friend who stood by me through everything. I don't know what I would have done if she hadn't been there for me."

Leslie also feels that of critical importance for her in adjusting to her difficult situation was moving through her frustration with God to an acceptance of his will. "Once I got past the frustration with my situation, I really felt a deeper relationship with the Lord, and a lot of my fear also went away."

Bob points to his second surgery as an important time in his recovery. He says, "In my second surgery, I sensed myself drifting away from my body, but my faith in God and others' prayers helped me to come back to my body. I lived through it to become a living symbol of God's faith."

Lynn Marie-Itner Klammer is a licensed clinical psychologist, college educator and writer who lives in Frankenmuth, Mich.

How to be a supportive friend: (in good times and bad)

1. Listen.
2. Keep confidential what your friend tells you.
3. Don't be judgmental.
4. Respect your friend's feelings (even though you may not understand them).
5. Do the kinds of things your friend wants to do.
6. Live in the here-and-now — value the time you still have with your friend.

Education

Pedagogeries



Alyce Oosterhuis

A classy event

Last Saturday I attended a "retirement roast" for one of our Christian school principals. He had been teaching and leading in the Edmonton system since 1972, and it was very evident that in those years, his vision and energy fuelled many innovative educational projects and programs.

Of the people present at the dinner, memories extended beyond the specific teaching years; one person remembered the honoree from 1958 as a teenage Christian Reformed recruit who was much in demand by his female CRC peers.

At the conclusion of the evening I decided that a celebrity dinner like this has many similarities to the memorial services we frequently organize today after a funeral — except that there are no tears for the lost loved one, and the one who is being commemorated is present to hear and/or expand on what is said. An evening in which a lifetime of memories are shared does function to "lay to rest" and say farewell to a career, but it is also a loss experience, though without the sharpened edges of grief.

Time neals

What I found most striking about the evening and the constant mingling of past and present friends was the awareness that in the vast scope of a lifetime career the many little "barbs" and hurts fade away. There were teachers, principals, and board members, who had at one time berated and severely criticized each other, now engaged in animated conversation.

What was evident at this retirement dinner is that when praise and criticism are examined through the loop of time, there is an overwhelming sense of joy, with few regrets.

The foibles and eccentricities of the retiree and friends could be named and fondly remembered without bitterness and anger. This retirement evening was one of forgiveness for each of us who were inept when we should have been able; harsh when we should have been empathic; greedy when we could have been more generous; ambitious when we ought to have been less driven.

I often warn our student teachers that one negative evaluative remark is recalled more vividly than 100 words of praise. What was evident at this retirement dinner is that when praise and criticism are examined through the loop of time, there is an overwhelming sense of joy, with few regrets.

In the next decade, many Canadian Christian schools are going to be experiencing retirements and commemorations of school histories. And in a number of those schools' stories there is much which should be forgotten rather than dredged up again. Yet in the very act of recall there is much that emerges as a historical balm of healing and communal praise.

So commemorate, enjoy, dine well, laugh heartily, and sing God's praises; and be glad that our memorial Christmas dinners are not dinners for Christ's retirement.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis teaches education and psychology at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alberta, and is still some years from retirement.

Chemistry student's research draws international attention



Dr. Peter Mahaffy and Nathaniel Martin (inset) experiment with lint.

Nancy Olthuis

EDMONTON — Laundry dryer lint. You probably toss a little pile away every week. But recent King's chemistry graduate Nathaniel Martin spent two summers as a research assistant, collecting and analyzing hundreds of samples of it for trace amounts of the metal lead.

Martin was part of an interdisciplinary team led by King's chemists Peter Mahaffy and Ken Newman, funded by a grant to Peter Mahaffy from the PEW Summer Research Program. Collaborators included scientists from a federal government research laboratory, and environmental health professionals from the regional health authority.

Martin compared levels of lead in dryer lint from homes of a control group of King's staff members with levels from homes of workers in the radiator repair industry, and from communal laundry dryers at the Bissell Centre, an inner-city Edmonton service agency. The team found much higher levels of lead in the lint from homes of the workers with occupational exposure.

New screening method

Their research results, reported this August in a leading environmental science journal, suggest that measuring trace levels of lead dryer lint may be a new, non-intrusive method for screening households for dangerous levels of environmental lead. Environmental lead is a serious problem which causes developmental defects in young children in North America.

The research team's findings have attracted a great deal of attention, with reports appearing in the British *New Scientist* magazine, Washington-based *Science News*, AAAS radio's science news program, Dis-

covery Channel television, the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Calgary Herald*.

Peter Mahaffy sees Martin's success as one result of the unusual emphasis King's faculty and staff place on collaborative research with undergraduates. "Each of our first-year chemistry students carries out an open-ended research project, and every graduating science student carries out a significant

final year project under the mentorship of a faculty member. We've also been able to find funding for quite a number of students over the years to work full-time on summer research projects with a faculty member at King's or elsewhere.

"The educational benefits and enthusiasm for scientific work that comes to students who work on important, open-ended projects are one of the major benefits of our B.Sc. program," Mahaffy says. The initial work on the environmental lead project was done as a class project by his King's environmental chemistry students in 1994, and this past spring another group of students applied this same method to compare levels of lead in Edmonton with those in Cape Town, South Africa, where leaded gasoline is still widely used.

Nathaniel Martin is now a graduate student at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, working on his PhD in chemistry.

van der Woerd
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David A. van der Woerd B.A., LL.B.

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Comment

Sins – and forgiveness – span the generations

Dear Mary,

The topics of our last two letter exchanges keep occupying my mind. Recently Johanna and I rented a video of *The Chamber*. This American film spoke directly to grandparent-grandchildren relationships. It's the story of a grandson-lawyer who tries to prevent the legal execution of his grandfather, a convicted murderer.

Grandpa and grandson meet for the first time in jail, on death row. Grandpa is a grizzled racist, a Klu Klux Klan member convicted of killing two small children in the bombing of the office of a civil rights lawyer.

The grandson opposes capital punishment and is prepared to pull out all legal stops to prevent this execution, even though his views are diametrically opposed to those of his grandfather. The story's stew contains the grandson's contempt for what his grandfather represents, the issue of capital punishment, a dose of behind-the-scenes political machinations, and the blood bond that ties these two men together, a bond that also pulls in some other family members.

So I got to thinking about grandparents whose lives may have been destructive for subsequent generations. About grandchildren who had to (have to) face the fact that their grandparents were enthusiastic Nazi supporters of Hitler, even SS soldiers and concentration camp murderers. And about those who have to live with the memories of grandparental sexual abuse. And about those who have observed the scars in the lives of their parents because of what they experienced as children.

And before too long I got to thinking about the generation of my own grandparents, and then about myself as a grandfather. The whole of my thoughts yielded some pretty pictures, and many more not so pretty.

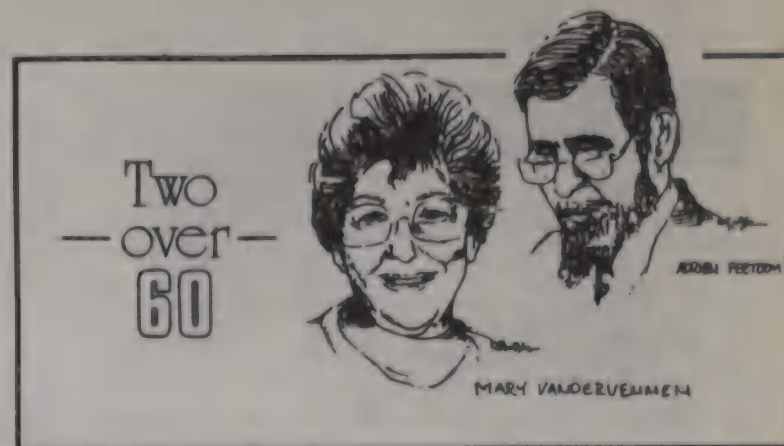
Then I got to thinking about forgiveness. About my grandparents being children of their own times (and somewhat victims of their own grandparents of course), and about grandchildren I know who manage to love grandparents whose serious flaws they know. And about the fifth commandment. And about rejecting stereotyping, declaring grandparents either flawless saints or unredeemable sinners.

And before I finished this letter to you, I also thought about the enduring brokenness we experience as we live life and reflect on it. Is nothing sacred? I concluded that no, nothing is, not even grandparent/grandchild relationships.

But that's not the end of the story. For forgiveness is real if you let it be — often exhibited most vividly in the lives of children. In little grandchildren who hug and kiss their grandparents anyway. In adult grandchildren who seek the company of their old relatives with some flowers and a smile. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound!"

Isn't human life ultimately a stew of mysteries and an encyclopedia of unresolved puzzles? Funny, those thoughts were a greater comfort to me than are neat forgiveness packages served up in many so-called Christian novels. By the way, in the film, Grandpa was executed.

*Love,
Adrian*



Dear Adrian,

My goodness, we are really coming to the sober side of these generational bonds, aren't we? I have to agree with you that they are not sacred. But they are powerful — more powerful than we often like to think. Sometimes beautiful, sometimes tragic, most often a combination of both.

I've always been intrigued by the fact that with all the commandments in the Bible to love one another, love our enemies, love our neighbors, etc., nowhere does God command us to love our parents. Of course they're not excluded from the general command to love. But the commandment is to "honor" your parents. I think that of all the kinds of relationships dealt with in the Bible, the ones around the generations are the most structured and precise. "Honor your father and your mother." "Provoke not your children to wrath." "Train up a child in the way he should go."

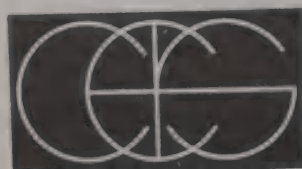
I don't want to make too much of this, but it seems to me that God in his infinite mercy and wisdom knew that the love required in these closest of all relationships might be the hardest to come by. Parents and children at whatever level of generation we're talking about can drive each other crazy, can cause the deepest wounds to each other, as well as bless each other with the deepest human love and longing imaginable. Probably most generational relationships contain all these elements in different proportions.

I like your thoughts about forgiveness. But I often muse, too, about how God can trump our best and our worst efforts at parenting almost in spite of ourselves, sometimes bringing lovely fruit out of the most unlikely soil. We usually look at the children who have obviously been damaged, and we don't see the ones who grew up in similar circumstances and have thrived. I've always maintained we spend too much time studying pathology and not enough time studying the factors that help some children (and adults, for that matter) create meaningful and productive lives out of the most difficult experiences.

Maybe the last word in this little discussion should belong to the late Carl Withaker. Carl was a passionate believer in the power of family bonds, and a superb practitioner and teacher of family therapy. But he used to say, tongue-in-cheek, "Maybe the reason grandparents and grandchildren get along so well is that they have a common enemy!"

*Best,
Mary*

Adrian Peetoom is a retired educational editor who lives in Waterloo, Ont. Mary Vander Vennen is a retired therapist who lives in Toronto.



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News Comment

Two weeks that were



Bert Hielema

EACH MORNING WHILE I am temporarily living in the U.S. I dutifully glance into the local paper, the *Raleigh (North Carolina) News and Observer*, searching for news that will interest people in the wider world. Here is an item from a place not so far from here, Lynchburg, Virginia, where the spokesman for the Moral Majority dwells, Jerry Falwell, who would object to be called a spokesperson.

Falwell has produced a video, of which he has already sold 2000 copies at \$28 (US) each, called "A Christian's Guide to the Millennium Bug." To stave off the calamities that may come with the event, he "intends to stock up on food, sugar, gasoline and — get this — ammunition."

I guess for him the Sword of the Spirit is not enough: he needs a real sword or, for our modern times, real guns with real ammunition. He also offers the possibility of a worldwide Christian revival because "the Y2K problem may be the signal that Christ will return to carry his believers up to heaven" (guns and ammunition included, I presume). According to the Moral Majority Monarch, the Great Rapture may be at hand. Well, I'd say: wait a minute, not so fast.

I saw Jerry Falwell on television by sheer accident a while ago while flipping channels (my favorite and very annoying TV habit), claiming that all 754,389 words (or some figure in that range) in the Bible are true, every one of them. I wonder which version he used.

ANOTHER STRANGE Millennium-related thing I ran across says that about 100 American Christians have moved to the Mount of Olives section of Jerusalem to await the hour of the Millennium, expecting an apocalyptic end. Stay tuned for more signs of Millennium mania.

WHILE IN RALEIGH I've had the opportunity to test the American medical system. I was running my 8.5 km loop around a lake in the beautiful park setting which is Raleigh, N.C., when at the 2 km mark I suddenly felt my neck painfully stiffening up, with the ache extending to my skull. Perhaps foolishly, I completed my run, be it a bit slower.

However, in the next days the headaches persisted, robbing me of my usual appetite. So I called a headache clinic, where I got an appointment the next day which cost me \$250 (US), which I hope to recoup from my travel insurance. The Harvard-trained neurologist, after examining my reflexes and vital statistics such as blood pressure (normal; pulse rate low), weight (low), pronounced that I probably had arthritis in my neck.

But to make sure he wanted me to have a scan — for a mere \$1,400 (US), which I politely refused, fearing that I might not get it refunded since I thought the case was rather weak. He promised to send me a letter, and armed with it I expect, eventually, to get a neck scan in the nearest hospital here in Ontario. By the way, before treatment I had to sign three pages of waivers and what all, just in case I might want to sue the clinic for malpractice.

MEDICAL CARE SEEMS very accessible here; at a price. In general, similar treatment here costs more than in Canada. No wonder the medical care portion of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 14 per cent compared to nine per cent in Canada. However, when you have the money or very good insurance, immediate access to the most modern equipment and the best medical brains is guaranteed. Fortunately for many illnesses, the cure with a doctor takes eight days, and without medical assistance, a week. Perhaps a certain waiting period is

not all that bad, except in acute cases such as urgent heart operations and cancer treatment.

A PLACE THAT MADE the news, even here in North Carolina, was Buenos Aires. There a meeting was held to hammer out details on how to reduce global warming. Buenos Aires means Good Air, and this to me suggests that the UN organizers have a sense of humor. Also a good sign is that last year these same people met in Kyoto, Japan. Kyoto is pronounced (more or less): Key-auto. Also very appropriate because the key to buenos aires, good air, is the auto.

The choices of geographical locations with such appropriate names could hardly have been coincidence. Perhaps when the agreements are being carried out they will meet again to celebrate, but in Los Angeles, city of The Angels — the most motorized city in the world. If last year's Kyoto agreement is taken seriously we in North America must expect to reduce energy use by 20 per cent in less than a decade. We Canadians have the dubious honor of being the greatest users of energy per capita in the world; yes, exceeding the Americans.

KEN STARR HAS been in the news here a lot. Let me just give one comment: Rrats. The entire impeachment process is seen by ordinary people as a dead-end road.

RUSSIA. MURDER and Mayhem. Hundreds of millions of dollars-worth of food aid are being sent from the U.S. to the once and still evil empire. This is good economic news for American farmers, as abundance of supply has created low prices; and it is also a gesture of goodwill for the politicians.

Many people in Russia are afraid that these gifts will go the same way as the billions of dollars in IMF funds, ending up not to the benefit of the poor, but in the pockets of the gangsters and mafia, and sold at dear prices on the black market. Somebody has compared present-day Russia to the Weimar Republic in Germany just prior to Hitler's ascendancy. In that case too, there was a sick, ineffectual leader (von Hindenburg) and runaway inflation. Strong leadership is indeed required in Russia, but let's hope, no more Hitlers or

Stalins arise.

FROM CHINA COMES news that a third of young Chinese men will face premature deaths from smoking if current patterns continue. China makes up 20 per cent of the world's population but smokes 30 per cent of the world's cigarettes. Almost 70 per cent of Chinese men become smokers before age 25.

The way in which smoking causes death there is different than in the West: Chinese men contract chronic lung disease rather than lung cancer, and tuberculosis rather than heart disease. This is because air pollution in general is so terrible in China that it makes the population more vulnerable to these diseases.

As smoking restrictions gain strength in Canada and the U.S., tobacco companies worldwide are concentrating on the more vulnerable and unregulated countries. A buck is a buck is a buck, after all.

"WE WILL SOON BE inundated with nonsense about how wonderful it is to be old. The baby-boom generation, now becoming long in the tooth, thick in the middle, and sparse on the scalp, will demand it." So starts a *New York Times* column by long-time journalist, commentator, and now *Masterpiece Theatre* host, Russell Baker.

To be older has its advantages. However, to be called a senior citizen is, in my mind, not a compliment. There is a senior citizens' club in Tweed, where I live, but I have no inclination to join it.

When Bismarck introduced the old age pension in Germany about 125 years ago, the pay-out started at age 65, while the average citizen lived only till 45. Now that the average person lives till 75, keeping the same ratio, a state pension would have to start at age 108 ($65/45 \times 75 = 108$). Even a straight 20 years difference would indicate a pension starting at 95. A person at age 65 generally lives till 80. This would give us older people, many of whom are in excellent health, a great opportunity for volunteer work.

In our Meals on Wheels group one man is 84. I bring meals to others, often younger than I am and fully capable of doing the same thing. Perhaps old age, to a great extent, is a state of mind. The more we stay in touch with reality and involved, the longer we will have a generally healthy life. Neck arthritis notwithstanding.

The Hielemas are enjoying the much milder climate in Raleigh, North Carolina, where they are privileged to have a separate, full-service apartment in their daughter's home. They normally live in Tweed, Ont.

We let them take the Christ out of Christmas

Dennis Daily


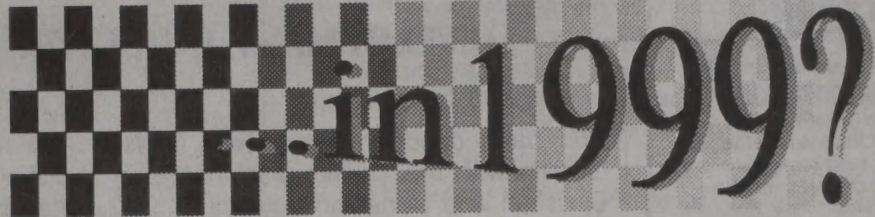
LOS ANGELES, CA (November 28, 1998) — It is no secret that, with each passing year, what is perceived as the "Christmas season" begins earlier and earlier. We've come a long way from the time that hardly anyone really got excited about Christmas until Christmas Eve. Many of us are old enough to remember a time when most people didn't even put up and decorate the tree until the 24th. It then remained in place until Twelfth Night. On that night, people would bring their trees to the city square or park and have a huge bonfire to celebrate the official end of the Christmas season. The next day, of course, being Epiphany.

Still though, year after year, we hear sermons preached about the secularization of Christmas. We hear loud complaints from the pulpit about the way the commercial world has **STOLEN** Christmas. Actually, from my point of view, we Christians actually **GAVE CHRISTMAS AWAY**

Classifieds

<p>Classified Rates</p> <p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$40.00 Anniversaries \$45.00 2-column anniversaries \$90.00 Obituaries \$45.00 Notes of thanks \$35.00 Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>a) Christian Courier reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format., b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) Christian Courier will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. Christian Courier reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the Christian Courier and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p> <div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Our new e-mail address: ccadpromo@aol.com </div>	<p>Birthdays</p> <p>FLIM:</p>  <p>Congratulations to Gerrit Hendrik Flim on his 100th birthday!</p> <p>Nijverdal, Ov. Whitby the Neth. Ont. 1899 January 4 1999 On Jan. 4, 1999, our father, Opa and great-grandfather</p> <p>GERRIT HENDRIK FLIM hopes to celebrate his 100th birthday.</p> <p>He still rides his bicycle occasionally! Thanks to God for giving us our father for these many years. He's seen many changes in his long life, but has experienced that God is ever faithful.</p> <p>One of Dad's favorite Dutch hymns is: <i>"De hoop der zaligheid."</i> <i>Die hoop moet al ons leed verzachten:</i> <i>Komt reisgenoten! 't hoofd omhoog!</i> <i>Voor hen, die 't heil des Heren wachten,</i> <i>Zijn bergen vlak en zeeën droog.</i> <i>O zaligheid niet af te meten!</i> <i>O vreugd die alle smart verbant!</i> <i>Daar is de vreemd'lingschap vergeten;</i> <i>En wij, wij zijn in 't vaderland!</i></p> <p>His thankful children: Aly & Ike Dykstra — Orono, Ont. Dien Oudyk — Oshawa, Ont. Henk & Flora Flim — Oshawa, Ont. Berta & Albert Hosmar — Whitby, Ont. Anne Flim — Lethbridge, Alta. Jenny & Cameron Linnell — Woodstock, Ont. Joanne & Fred Wind — Whitby, Ont. 26 grandchildren and 45 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Open house at Durham Christian Homes, 100 Glen Hill Drive South, Whitby, Ont., on Jan. 9, 1999, from 10 a.m. to noon, and 2 p.m. till 4 p.m.</p> <p>Home address: 14 Canadian Oaks Drive, Whitby, ON L1N 6W8</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>1943 December 30 1998</p> <p>JELLE and SHIRLEY BERGSMA</p> <p>With glory and praise to our Lord, we celebrate your 55th wedding anniversary Dad and Mom!</p> <p>"Through your faithful prayers and the bountiful response of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, everything He wants to do in and through us will be done" (Phil. 1:19, The Message Bible).</p> <p>Your loving and grateful kids, grandkids and greats: Wilma & Bob Vanderkooi — Toronto, Ont. Shane & Noga, Buck & Julie Ted & Pat Bergsma — Calgary, Alta. Wendy, Ryan George & Sheila Bergsma — Burk's Falls, Ont. Paul, Brad, Jody, Amanda, David & Liz (Rachel) Joan & Ken Horlings — Bradford, Ont. Melanie, Jennifer, Lori, Cheryl & Craig (Tori, Carly) Frank & Sheila Bergsma — Errington, B.C. Richard, Tammy & Tony (Amber, Alyssa), Tara-Lynn & Alan Millie & Doug Dennis — Nanticoke, Ont. Chris, Jeff & Cherie, Ashley Elaine & Dale Money — Barrie, Ont. Natalie, Tracy, Shawn, Holly Al Bergsma & Dale — Emsdale, Ont. Danielle, Erica</p> <p>Open house will be held on Dec. 29, 1998, from 2 - 4 p.m., in Parkview Meadows, Townsend, Ont. No gifts please.</p> <p>Address: 76 Town Centre Dr., Apt. 102, Valleyview, Townsend, ON N0A 1S0. Phone: (519) 587-3240.</p>		
	<p>Personal</p> <p>39-year-old Christian single male, from the GTA, likes travel, sports, camping and spending time with family and friends, seeks caring Christian woman, 33 - 43 years, for friendship and possible long-term commitment. Send letters to File #2686, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.</p>	<p>For Rent</p> <p>For rent: Boerderij (farm), all conveniences, summer and winter, in Friesland, the Neth. Reasonable. For information phone: (519) 863-2096</p>	<p>Miscellaneous</p> <p>CLINTON, ONTARIO ADULT LIFE LEASE RESIDENCES</p> <p>available 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call (519) 233-7296 or (519) 482-7862.</p>	<p>Obituaries</p> <p>Veendam, Gr. Grimsby, Ont. June 25, 1912 - Nov. 16, 1998</p> <p>1 Corinthians 6: 19, 20</p> <p>Our heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom, took unto Himself our husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather</p> <p>JURJEN HARTMAN</p> <p>peacefully, at Shalom Manor in Grimsby, Ont., in his 87th year. Loving husband of Jurriens Hartman (Dijkhuis). Loving children: Eilt & Hetty Hartman — Dundas Berend & Carol Hartman — Jamaica West Indies Diane & Andy Regnerus — Dundas Tina & Ralph Rodermond — Burlington Ann & Joe Van Tuyl — Wellandport Bert & Wilma Hartman — Dundas Blake & Sandra Hartman — Hamilton</p> <p>Loving grandfather of 24 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Funeral service was held at Calvin Chr. Ref. Church of Dundas, Ont. on Nov. 20, 1998.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Mrs. Jurriena Hartman, Shalom Manor, Apt. 230, 12 Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby ON L3M 4N5</p>
		<p>Thank You</p> <p>ENGELAGE:</p> <p>Hil and Matty Engelage want to thank everyone who came to the open house at Providence Place on Saturday, Nov. 21, to help us celebrate a 65th birthday. We hope you all had a good time also. Special thanks to our children for giving us such a lovely time and arranging it all! Thanks to the grandchildren who decorated and served the more than 100 who came, Fred and Mildred for having the whole family at their place for the evening. We thank the Lord and all of you. It was wonderful. Thanks also for all the cards and gifts received. May we hereby wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year 1999.</p> <p>Sincerely, Hil and Matty Engelage, Providence Place, Apt. 205, 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., Whitby, ON L1N 8R4</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>ONE TO ANOTHER</p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #12 923 2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7</p>	

Classifieds

Obituaries	Obituaries	Miscellaneous
<p>Hornhuizen, Gr. Thunder Bay, Ont. the Neth. Dec. 6, 1923 - Dec. 8, 1998 On Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1998, PETRONELLA CATHARINA (NELLIE) HEEREMA (nee BEUKEMA) died without regaining consciousness following a major stroke on Nov. 27, 1998. Much of Nellie's life was devoted to the care of her family. She had a passion for learning, enjoyed her friends, travel, needlework, music and singing, saw beauty in animals and flowers and showed compassion and generosity to those less fortunate. She will be dearly missed. Beloved wife of Hendrik (Henry) Heerema for 52 years. Dear mother to: Jerry & Pam — London, Ont. Fred — Toronto, Ont. Peter & Millie — Thunder Bay, Ont. Martin & Helen — Thunder Bay, Ont. Don & Kathy — Thunder Bay, Ont. Daughter-in-law Barbara & Frank Agostino — Thunder Bay, Ont. Also survived by sister Marie Beukema in Zeist, the Neth., 11 grandchildren and numerous in-laws and their children. Predeceased by son Heerke (Huck) on Dec. 16, 1983. Her funeral service was held at First Chr. Ref. Church in Thunder Bay, Ont., on Dec. 12, 1998, and she was buried at Sunset Memorial Gardens. "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps. 119:105). Correspondence address: Henry Heerema, 164 Shirley Road, R.R. 12, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E3</p>	<p>Ten Boer Brampton Gr., the Neth. Ont. June 5, 1908 - Nov. 30, 1998 "Because He loves me" says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges My name" (Ps. 91:14). After living 90 full years the Lord took our husband, father, Opa and great-Opa HENDRIK WIERSEMA home to be with him. Loving wife Lammie. Loving children: Howie Wiersema — Toronto Henry & Gail Wiersema — Strathroy Loving Opa of 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Predeceased by daughter-in-law Sharon, daughter Ria, and great-grandson Kao. Funeral service was held on Friday, Dec. 4, 1998, at Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Miscellaneous</p> <p>EH JJ SHOW Christian TV Entertainment Times: Vision TV Cable Network Thursday mornings 6:30 a.m. ET & PT 7:30 a.m. MT & AT Also CJIL-TV (The Miracle Channel) Lethbridge, Alberta 9:30 a.m. and a repeat in evening Sponsored by Voortman Cookies Web page: www.ehjjshow.com</p> 	<p>What's new for Christian Courier...</p> <p> in 1999?</p> <p>New Price \$36.95* A bargain: less than \$1.50 per issue! *Cdn.+ GST</p> <p>New Frequency Bi-weekly Twenty-six issues: we save on postage; you save on recycling!</p> <p>New Content Weightier The same great content, but deeper and more solid!</p> <p>New Look Brighter Full color, spot color, and new sophistication in layout!</p> <p>If you're a current subscriber thanks for being part of our family! If you're a former subscriber isn't it time to come back home? If you're new to <i>Christian Courier</i> join the ranks.</p> <p>Share our Reformed view of the world in 1999! Call our toll free number 1 (800) 969-4838 to subscribe, or fax us, or email us, or mail the coupon below.</p> <p>Yes, I/we would like to subscribe to <i>Christian Courier</i> in 1999.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My/our cheque for <input type="checkbox"/> \$39.54 CDN / <input type="checkbox"/> \$31.60 US is enclosed. <input type="checkbox"/> Please bill me/us.</p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Prov _____ Postal Code _____</p> <p>Send to: <i>Christian Courier</i> #4 - 261 Martindale Road St. Catharines, ON Canada L2W 1A1</p> <p>Or contact us at: Phone: (905) 682-8311 1 (800) 969-4838 Fax: (905) 682-8313 ccsubscrip@aol.com</p>

Bethel Christian Reformed Church, in Dunnville, Ont., is seeking a full-time

PASTOR

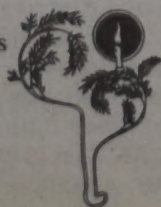
to provide sound biblical preaching, ministry to youth and pastoral care. Our church membership stands at 110 families. Please send us a copy of your profile. Our church profile is available upon request. For more information please contact Mr. William Aantjes, R.R. 3, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. Phone: (905) 386-6633.

Personal Christmas Greetings

A joyful and blessed holiday season to all my friends and relatives across Canada.

To all my friends and relatives:
Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year.

Mrs. Femmie Martens
Holland Christian Homes
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Mrs. Fenna Hulzebos
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Miscellaneous

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Job Opportunities



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See page 17 of this issue!!



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You have opportunity to assist Christian schools in Ontario with the challenge of financing a distinctively Christian and Canadian curriculum K-12. This position is expected to be filled in January of 1999.

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☎905-648-2100 ☎905-648-2110
e-mail: oacs@oacs.org web site: www.oacs.org

PRINCIPAL

London Parental Christian School is currently accepting applications for the position of Principal. Located in London, Ont., the London Parental Christian School is a K-8 school with an enrolment of 215 students and a teaching staff of 14 teachers. Applicants must be spiritually mature active Christians with administrative abilities and a strong commitment to Christian education. Candidates must demonstrate a strong vision for Christian education and strengths in the areas of visionary leadership, staff development and team building.

Please forward resume, a minimum of 4 references, a statement of faith and a statement of philosophy of Christian education to:

Peter Van Geest, *Principal Search Committee Chair*
74 Breton Park Cres., London, ON N5W 1N1
(519) 455-9014

Application deadline is Dec. 21, 1998.

Youth/Worship Leader Position

Trinity Chr. Ref. Church is now accepting resumes for a **Youth Co-ordinator or Youth and Worship Co-ordinator**. Committed Christians with a passion for working with youth and leading worship are encouraged to apply. Trinity Chr. Ref. Church is located in Abbotsford, B.C., 45 min. East of Vancouver, in the heart of the scenic Fraser Valley.

Send resumes by Dec. 31, 1998, to:

Attention: Staffing Committee/Box 51
Trinity Christian Reformed Church
3215 Trethewey Street, P.O. Box 2268
Abbotsford, BC V2X 4X2

Pacific Christian School

Victoria, B.C.

Secondary Assistant Principal

Pacific Christian School is a well-established interdenominational Christian school with 775 students in grades Pre-K-12. The school draws its enrollment from 80 different churches representing 14 different denominations in the greater Victoria area.

Assistant Principal applications are being solicited for the Secondary School for the 1999/2000 school year. The successful applicant would join a high school administration team in overseeing the operations of a secondary school staff of 26. Candidates must be committed Christians, team players, able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education and be certifiable by the B.C. College of Teachers. Enquiries may be directed to the secondary principal. Please submit letter of application, resume and statement of faith to Search Committee in care of:

John Messelink, Secondary Principal, by Jan. 15, 1999.

Pacific Christian School

654 Agnes Street, Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6
Phone: (250) 479-4532/Fax: (250) 479-3511
E-mail: pcshs@islandnet.com

Special Education Coordinator

The Abbotsford Christian School Society is accepting applications for the **Special Education Coordinator's position** beginning in the 1999/2000 school year. This position involves coordinating services for special education students in an inclusive setting at the two K to 7 campuses as well as the Grade 8 to 12 campus. Applicants should have a minimum of 5 years teaching experience with training and/or experience in Special Education, and possess or be eligible for BC Teacher Certification. Tasks include the following:

- Supervising teaching assistants
- Arranging and coordinating contracted support services
- Coordinating the teams providing special education
- Serving as a resource person with classroom teachers
- Administering and reporting on special testing
- Working with individual students

For further information contact: **Dwight Moodie, Principal, Abbotsford Chr. Secondary Campus, 35011 Old Clayburn Road, Abbotsford, BC V2S 7L7. Telephone: (604) 850-5342.**

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ontario

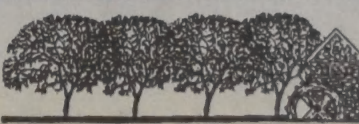
Large Christian Reformed Church with multiple staff has an opening for a **full-time administrator**.

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Please send resumes by Dec. 21, 1998, to:

First Christian Reformed Church, 507 Talbot St.,
London, ON N6A 2S5, Fax: (519) 432-7613, or call
(519) 432-7997. Attention: Lead Pastor.

Classifieds

Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous												
<p>PASTOR</p> <p>Houston Chr. Ref. Church in beautiful northwest British Columbia is seeking a full-time pastor to provide sound biblical preaching, ministry to youth and pastoral care. The church membership stands at 67 families; which translates into 169 professing members and 154 non-professing or baptized members. Please send a copy of your profile. A church profile is available upon request. For more information please contact:</p> <p>Rick Delau, Search Committee Houston Chr. Ref. Church Box 6, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0 Phone: (250) 845-7756 Fax: (250) 845-7578</p>	<p>DORDT COLLEGE</p> <p>Faculty Positions</p> <p>Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1999 in the following areas:</p> <table><tr><td>Art</td><td>Health, Physical Education and Recreation</td></tr><tr><td>Business Administration: two positions</td><td>Music-theory, literature, technology: potential position</td></tr><tr><td>Computer Science and Mathematics: potential two-year position</td><td>Philosophy</td></tr><tr><td>Director of Graduate Education</td><td>Spanish</td></tr><tr><td>Economics</td><td>Theatre Arts: potential two-year position</td></tr><tr><td>Education: potential two-year position</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Evaluation of applications continues until Feb. 1 or until the position is filled. To learn more about a position and receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest that provides evidence of that commitment and a curriculum vitae to Dr. Rockne McCarthy, Dordt College; 498 4th Ave. NE; Sioux Center, IA 51250; facsimile 712-722-4496; e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu</p> <p><i>Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.</i></p> <p>DORDT COLLEGE 498 4th Avenue NE Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697</p>	Art	Health, Physical Education and Recreation	Business Administration: two positions	Music-theory, literature, technology: potential position	Computer Science and Mathematics: potential two-year position	Philosophy	Director of Graduate Education	Spanish	Economics	Theatre Arts: potential two-year position	Education: potential two-year position		<p>Career Opportunity</p> <p>An expanding wholesale nursery is looking for a career-oriented individual to assume duties at a full-time entry level position. Candidates should be interested in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Accounting (A/P, A/R)• Assistant to Sales Manager/outside sales• Inventory maintenance• Office related shipping duties• Reception and general office support <p>Individuals must be reliable, computer literate (Lotus, WP7, Excel), and service oriented. Must possess excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, and the ability to multi-task. A positive attitude and excellent work habits are essential. Training will be provided. This is an excellent opportunity for the right individual.</p> <p>Please forward your resume by Monday, Jan. 4, 1999, to:</p> <p>J.C. BAKKER & SONS LIMITED 1209 Third Street, R.R. #3, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9 Fax: (905) 935-9921 E-mail: nursery@jcbakker.com Visit us on our website at www.jcbakker.com</p>
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<p>Teachers</p> <p>Full-time Administrative Position</p> <p>ALLISTON, Ont.: Alliston Community Chr. School is searching for a full-time, experienced teaching principal to lead a growing inter-denominational school. The school has a present enrollment of 82 students from JK-8 with 47 supporting families and is situated in a rapidly expanding community. Job commences Aug. 1, 1999, optional 80% position negotiable. Please send resumes to:</p> <p>Harry Zantigh 22 Downey Avenue Alliston, ON L9R 1J7 (705) 435-5858 (705) 435-9212 mikel.jane@sympatico.ca</p>	<p>PRINCIPAL</p> <p>Ponoka Chr. School is seeking applications for a teaching principal for the school year beginning September 1999. Ponoka Chr. School with an enrollment of approx. 90 students in ECS to Grade 9, is located in the beautiful Parkland area of Alberta in the Edmonton-Calgary corridor. Information package available. Please respond to Mrs. E.C. Land, (403) 783-6563. Application deadline: Jan. 15, 1999.</p>	<div></div> <p>Tollendale Village in beautiful Barrie, Ontario near the shores of Kempenfelt Bay</p> <p>A Christian Retirement Community thoughtfully planned and designed on 14 acres to create a secure and relaxed mature adult lifestyle. Charming 1 & 2 bedroom suites as well as garden units are available on an equity lease or rental basis. Projected occupancy date: Fall of 1999. We offer attractive investment opportunities with interest rates at 7% for a 5-year-term and 6% for a 3-year-term.</p> <p>For suites contact: Albert VanderMey Phone: (705) 722-0469/Fax: (705) 722-8455 For investments contact: Harry Eisses Phone: (705) 436-1980/Fax: (705) 431-6094</p>												
<p>BRESLAU, Ont.: Woodland Chr. High School is now accepting applications for a part-time temporary teaching position for the period from mid-March to the end of June. Course to be taught include: Grade 9 and 10 French, Grade 9 mathematics, Grade 11 math for technology, Grade 11 general level biology. Please send inquiries and applications to:</p> <p>Gary Van Arragon, Principal Woodland Chr. High School R.R. #1, Breslau, ON N0B 1M0 Phone (519) 648-2114 Fax (519) 648-3402</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Events</p>												
<p>WOODBRIIDGE, Ont.: Toronto District Chr. High School requires an additional full-time teacher for second semester. Needed is a teacher for Grade 9 courses (science, English, geography). Please send resume, credentials and statement of faith to:</p> <p>Ren Siebenga c/o Toronto District Chr. High School 377 Woodbridge Avenue Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8 e-mail: rsiebeng@tdchristian.on.ca</p>	<p>ST. CATHARINES, Ont.: Beacon Chr. High School invites applications for a maternity leave position in the area of English and drama beginning in mid-March of 1999. Applicants need to be qualified and need to demonstrate a love for God, a love for students, and a love for English. Please send resume and relevant information to:</p> <p>Ted Harris, Principal Beacon Chr. High School 2 O'Malley Drive St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7 Fax: (905) 937-1130</p>	<p>Calendar of Events</p> <p>Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.</p> <p>Dec. 18 An evening of song and Scripture reading with the Liberation Choir under the direction of Willem Van Suydam at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (70 James St. S.) Hamilton, Ont., 8 p.m.</p> <p>Dec. 18 Organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, 7:30 p.m., Central Presbyterian Church. Hamilton, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.</p> <p>Dec. 19 Christmas concert by the Ontario Chr. Music Assembly under the direction of Leendert Kooij. Andre Knevel (organ), in the Willowdale United Church (Kenneth Avenue), Willowdale, Ont., at 8 p.m. Admission: Adults \$10, Students \$6, Children under 12 free. For info. call (416) 636-9779</p> <p>Dec. 19 Annual Christmas sing along concert with the St. Thomas ladies' choir and the St. Thomas male choir in Knox Presb. Church, St. Thomas, Ont., at 7:30 p.m. Free-will offering towards Christmas Care.</p> <p>Dec. 20 Celebration of 55 years of ministry of Rev. Remkes Kooistra at the Waterloo CRC (209 Bearinger Rd.), Waterloo, Ont.</p>												

News

Niagara farmer brings hope to Nigeria



This picture shows Hunse at a well-drilling site a few years ago. The wife of the chief of the Kambari tribe did not at first believe that Hunse could produce water in a place where there never had been water before. She was used to having to carry from a long distance. She thought the first pumped splashes of water coming from a newly drilled pipe was water Hunse had poured down the pipe. But a continuous supply persuaded her that water was indeed coming from below.

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Lambert Hunse does not remember how often he has travelled to Nigeria to help farmers raise chickens or pigs, to drill wells or to repair machinery. He guesses more than a dozen times. He doesn't like to admit that he always does so at his own expense. This year the retired fruit farmer and member of Covenant Christian Reformed Church in St. Catharines will spend Christmas in Nigeria again.

He and Cornelius Hirdes from Grand Bend, Ont., a member of the Exeter, Ont., CRC and an engineer by trade, have gone to Nigeria until the 10th of January to help repair a generator and hospital equipment for the hospital in Mkar. The power tends to go out in that part of the country from time to time, and it

may take days before it comes back. It is important that a hospital not be without power, says Hunse.

That Lambert Hunse's work is appreciated by the churches in Nigeria goes without saying. A church news sheet called the NKST Newsletter refers to him as a great friend of NKST (NKST stands for the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiev, which is a sister denomination to the Christian Reformed Church). The newsletter goes on to say that Hunse is a man who has made his impact felt everywhere.

A pain-filled journey

The story, furthermore, tells of how Hunse was able to save a man's life, although the purpose of his visit to an outlying area was to thank a pastor for having recovered his (Hunse's) passport



Nguhemen Keghennen contracted polio some years ago. The polio shot he had received earlier had been ineffective. Hunse took compassion on the boy and sent him toys, a Nintendo game among them. Hunse hopes to send him a wheelchair and a walker when the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) sends another of its periodic containers to Nigeria some time in the future.

that had gotten lost on a previous visit to Nigeria.

When Hunse arrived at the house where he thought he could find the pastor, the pastor had moved on and Hunse was instead led to the bedside of a man named Yarkwan, who was expected to die of serious burns if he did not immediately receive medical attention. The man had been hunting rats in a burning bush and had been caught by wind-whipped flames.

Hunse arranged for the man to come with him on the back of the truck he was driving to the Mkar hospital, where two volunteer doctors associated with Christian Reformed World

Missions were working.

It was a journey that lasted three hours and took them over a narrow bush road full of deep ruts and holes. They told the man he could scream as loud as he wanted to.

In Mkar the proper medicine was available, and the man's life was spared. It was only later that Lambert Hunse realized how God had used a string of events, including the loss of his passport and his reluctant search for a traveling pastor, to save Yarkwan's life. Hunse's home church, Covenant CRC in St. Catharines, Ont., paid part of Yarkwan's hospital bill.

Baby elephants go into foster care

PRETORIA, South Africa (Business Day) — A magistrate ruled that 30 young elephants have been cruelly treated. He awarded temporary custody of the animals to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA). Riccardo Ghiazza would remain the owner of the animals.

"This has become of public interest and is not of private interest anymore," magistrate Herman Glas said in his ruling. Glas said the animals had been neglected under their owner, Riccardo Ghiazza who runs African Game Services.

The NSPCA said the ele-

phants had been abused by Ghiazza's trainers, who hobbled them, deprived them of water and prodded them so often it caused open sores. "I am persuaded that with more care (injuries) could have been prevented," Glas said. Final custody will be decided later.

It is also possible that criminal charges of cruelty will still be lodged against Ghiazza, whose lawyer had maintained that the treatment of the elephants was valid under South African law. NSPCA executive director Marcelle French said the society would move the elephants as soon as possible.

News Digest

Santa Claus University

ROVANIEMI, Finland — Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland, is home to the new Santa Claus University, which took in its first class of 15 Finn students this year, the *Toronto Star* reports. Instructors cover topics such as how to avoid promising something parents can't deliver and what to say when a child asks why Santa didn't deliver a specific present last year. The university is considering offering a mini-course for Santas from overseas next year.

Homeless choir performs in Paris

PARIS (CP) — A choir of Montreal homeless people deeply moved Parisians on a recent singing tour there. The 18-member Accueil Bonneau embarked on a 10-day visit to Paris that was paid for by Montreal airline Air Transat as a goodwill gesture. While in Paris, the choir sang every day in the city's busiest subway stations and drew coverage from major French newspapers and TV networks.

"The homeless choir singers perform ... with an extraordinary fervor," said the Paris daily *Le Figaro*. The choir, which includes alcoholics and ex-drug addicts, usually sings in churches, schools, hospitals and seniors residences in Montreal. It has just released a second CD. Money raised by CD sales will go to the choir's new home, which replaces the Montreal hostel which was destroyed in a gas-leak explosion last summer.

Everest climbs worthless

TORONTO — Reinhold Messner, who became the first person to scale Mount Everest without bottled oxygen 20 years ago, decries the ease with which almost anyone with \$100,000 can hand it over and expect to climb the peak. Everest has been rendered worthless when you see how all these people now traipse up it. It's not like in the old days when you were purely responsible for yourself, he told Reuters.

Recently, Messner has been trying to drag a sled 2,000 km over the North Pole from Siberia to Canada. Pulling 150 kilograms in such freezing temperatures is almost impossible, he says. But that's where the charm lies.